

COMMUNICATION AND BREAKING BAD NEWS

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OBJECTIVES

- Describe the needs and challenges for effective communication
- Apply a Structured Model to practicing effective communication

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*COMMUNICATION OR
BREAKING BAD
NEWS
: A 6 STEP GUIDE*

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A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

- How important is a recipe?
 - Chocolate chip cookies
- How about a routine?
- Mornings-
 - What do you do Monday – Friday?
 - What do you do on Weekends?

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WHAT IS IMPORTANT WHEN BREAKING BAD NEWS?

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A 6 STEP GUIDE

1. Set the stage
2. What does the patient know?
3. How much does the patient want to know?
4. Share the information
5. Respond to feelings
6. Plan next steps and follow-up

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1. SET THE STAGE

- Environment
- People
- Background
- Interruptions

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2. WHAT DOES THE PATIENT KNOW?

- Get a sense of their understanding
- Where to start your discussion
- Identify misunderstandings
- Review for everyone in the patients own words

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3. HOW MUCH DOES THE PATIENT WANT TO KNOW?

- Big picture people vs. Detail people
- Cultural differences
- Patient has a right to refuse knowing but must do so

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4. SHARE THE INFORMATION

- No medical jargon
- Be direct, and honest
- “Warning shot”

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5. RESPOND TO FEELINGS

- Patients will react
- We need to be QUIET !!!
- Answer direct questions as precisely as possible

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6. PLAN NEXT STEPS AND FOLLOW-UP

- Next meeting
- Patient safe to drive or be alone
- News and plan will change of time
 - more meetings will be necessary

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6 STEP PROTOCOL

- Buckman Protocol
- SPIKES
 - Setting
 - Perception
 - Invitation
 - Knowledge
 - Emotions
 - Strategy or Summary

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A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

- Chocolate Chip Cookies
- A template for any news
- Practice, practice, practice
- The words you choose are important
- Inquiry before Advocacy

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MEETING WENT WELL WHEN ...

- We didn't cover too much
- Patient spoke the most !!!

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IS PROGNOSIS IMPORTANT?

- Illustration: Final Exams
- Most important information for patients
- Gives patient control and ability to plan
- Helps patients make decisions
- Why do families ask their nurse or social worker?

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IMPORTANCE

- Most people want to know
- Strengthens Physician - Patient Relationship
- Fosters Collaboration
- Permits patients, families to plan and cope

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ARE WE ANY GOOD AT IT?

- When are babies born?
- Overestimate by a factor of 3-5
- Death Trajectory
- We get better the closer we are to the end of life

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COMMUNICATING PROGNOSIS . . .

- Limits of prediction
- Hope for the best, plan for the worst
- Better sense over time
- Can't predict surprises, get affairs in order
- Reassure availability, whatever happens

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... COMMUNICATING PROGNOSIS

...

- Inquire about reasons for asking
- What are you expecting to happen?
- Ask how that information will help family
- How specific do you want me to be?
- What experiences have you had with:
 - other with the same illness?
 - others who have died?

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... COMMUNICATING PROGNOSIS

- Patients Vary
 - "Planners" want more details
 - Those seeking reassurance want less
- Avoid precise answers
 - Hours to Days ... Months to Years
 - Averages helpful?

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COMMUNICATING WITH THE PRIMARY PHYSICIAN

- Same communication principles - ask open ended questions
- Your opinion - threatening
- Reflecting WHY you have that opinion may be helpful

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WHAT QUESTIONS DO
YOU HAVE?

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