Patient Communication in Ophthalmic Practice

Challenges in the time of COVID-19

Presenter:
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Disclaimer

Due to the constantly changing nature of the SARS-CoV-2 / COVID-19 pandemic, data and guidance presented on any given date very quickly becomes outdated. Please note that the number of cases, country/state/local policies, and other guidance presented in this webinar may no longer apply in future.

Please refer to your country and local authorities for the latest applicable data, policies, and guidance.
The Singing Tree
10 Countries
22 Languages
List of Important Books Released in 2018
Published on Friday, April 20, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>India 2017 Yearbook</td>
<td>Rajiv Mehrishi</td>
<td>Launched by Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The Singing Tree</td>
<td>Ken Yngstain</td>
<td>Launched by Orbis India An illustrated book on visual impairment due to refractive error in children</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Lincoln in the Bardo</td>
<td>George Saunders</td>
<td>Won the Man Booker Prize for 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Journey of Women Law Reforms and the Law Commission of India Some Insights</td>
<td>Dr. Pavan Sharma</td>
<td>1st copy was received by the Vice President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Trivedra Ek Zindaginama</td>
<td>Nandan Singh</td>
<td>Biography of</td>
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2020
Impact of COVID-19

Direct impact:

- Increased morbidity
- Increase mortality
- Overwhelming the healthcare resources
- Financial stress on the general economy and the healthcare system
Impact of the lockdown

Indirect impact:

- Restricted movement of people
- Restricted access to healthcare
- Fear of going to a hospital
- Patient’s loss of income and financial stress
- Hospital’s loss of income and financial stress
Impact on Patients

- Patients may have had delay seeking care.
- Patients may have greater financial difficulties than normal.
- Patients may be under greater personal stress than normal.
- Whereas, under normal circumstance, family members would accompany the patient to the clinic, the patient may be alone.
- Patients may have other illnesses, including COVID 19 infection.
The second pandemic
Beliefs that increase risk:

- COVID-19 is no more dangerous than the flu
- Wearing a mask or social distancing does not lower risk
- If you are under 65 you are not at risk
- Children cannot get sick
- A COVID-19 vaccination is part of a global conspiracy
Impact of misinformation

Trust
Healthcare System

Trust
Best treatment for Misinformation

Communication
Definition of Communication

Communication is a process in which a person, through the use of signs or symbols, verbally and non-verbally, intentionally conveys meaning to another, in order to affect change.

Communication

Your Patients

Your Institution

Your Community

Your Country
Benefits of Patient Communication

- Better diagnosis
- Better treatment options
- Reduce patient loss from care
Patient loss

Screening → Clinic → Treatment → Follow up
Benefits of Patient Communication

- Better diagnosis
- Better treatment options
- Reduce patient loss from care
- Better treatment adherence
- Better patient outcomes
- Better patient satisfaction with care – important for referrals
- Better staff job satisfaction
- Better productivity
- Better business for the clinic
Patients + Families
Doctor – Patient Relationship

Trust in the Doctor

Respect for the Patient
Doctor – Patient Relationship: Traditional
Doctor–Patient Relationship: Today
No script that is correct for all patients

Each patient is unique with his own needs and circumstances

Communication must be tailored to each patient:

“Patient Centric Communication”
## Disease vs. Illness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Illness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How the doctor views the problem:</td>
<td>How the patient views the problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◆ Pathology</td>
<td>◆ Symptoms</td>
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<tr>
<td>◆ Symptoms</td>
<td>◆ Effect on life</td>
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<tr>
<td>◆ Treatment</td>
<td>◆ Fear and anxiety</td>
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The five stages of a consultation

1 – Initiating the consultation
2 - Gathering information
3 – Physical examination
4 – Explanation and planning
5 – Closing the consultation
Many patients in the waiting area.

Basic tests done by a nurse or technician.

Nurse brings the doctor a pile of patient charts.

A patient enters the examining room and sits down.

The doctor picks up the chart at the top of the pile, looks at the chart, makes an evaluation and performs some additional tests.

The doctor speaks to the patient, explains the diagnosis, and prescribes the treatment.

The doctor asks if there are any questions. The patient usually says "No" or simply shakes her head.

She leaves.

Next patient enters.
Alternative scenario

⚡ Doctor reads the patient’s chart before he see the patient.
⚡ When the patient enters, he greets her with a smile and asks her name.
⚡ He introduces himself and clarifies his role.
⚡ He maintains eye contact with the patient, as he speaks.
⚡ He invites the patient to sit down and asks if she is comfortable.
⚡ He asks the patient why she has come to the clinic.
⚡ He listen to her as she speaks. He encourage her to provide more details.
⚡ Each time he performs a test, he first explains why he is doing this test and asks the patient’s permission to proceed.
Alternative scenario

✧ Doctor reads the patient’s chart *before* he see the patient.
✧ When the patient enters, he greets her with a smile and asks her name.
✧ He introduces himself and clarifies his role.
✧ He maintains eye contact with the patient, as he speaks.
✧ He invites the patient to sit down and asks if she is comfortable.
✧ **He asks the patient why she has come to the clinic.**
✧ He listen to her as she speaks. He encourage her to provide more details.
✧ Each time he performs a test, he first explains why he is doing this test and asks the patient’s permission to proceed.
The opening question

**NO**

- How are you today?
- What can I do for you?
- When did your symptoms begin?

**Yes**

- Please tell me why you have come to the clinic today.
- Please tell me about when the symptoms began.
The Open-to-Closed Cone

Open Questions
(Tell me about…)

Closed Questions
(When? How long? Do you?)
The opening question

Benefits:

- Gain information about language, education, concerns
- Gain insight in the patient’s disease beliefs
Disease Beliefs may be:

- Science based.
- Religious based – disease is a punishment from God – cured by prayer.
- Shamanistic – an imbalance in the natural world – cured by sacrifice or traditional medicines.
- False information.
Managing patient’s disease beliefs

Always show respect for a patient’s beliefs!
There are two types of people:

Those who listen
Those who wait to talk
Attentive Listening

- **Wait.** There is nothing wrong with silence.
- **Facilitate responses.** Encourage the patient to begin or continue speaking.
- **Do not interrupt.**
- **Non-verbal communication.** Let your body show that you are interested in what the patient is saying.
- **Observe.** Look at the patient’s body language.
Confirmation

- Give the patient a summary of what you have heard.
- Ask the patient - is that correct?
- Anything to add?
The Mantra of Communication

Ask

Listen

Confirm
The five stages of a consultation

1. Initiating the consultation
2. Gathering information
3. Physical examination
4. Explanation and planning
5. Closing the consultation
Learning Communication Skills

Commitment by the clinician to learn the concepts and practice.

Commitment by the entire team to make communication a priority.
How can Orbis help?

Providing eye clinics with:

- Communication tools
- Live workshops
- Online courses
- Online interactive simulation software
- Creating regional centers of excellence in communication
Southern Africa - English
Ethiopia – English
Cameroon – French
Ghana - Twi
India – English, Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Malayalam, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu
Myanmar – English, Burmese
Nepal – English, Nepali
Peru/Bolivia - Spanish
Anatomy
Eye Diseases
Cataract
Cataract

The problem
- The lens of the eye is necessary to focus images onto the retina, at the back of the eye.
- The lens of the eye is normally clear, allowing light to pass into the eye.
- A cataract is a clouding of the lens – turning the lens from clear to milky white. This blocks the light from passing into the eye.
- A cataract starts small and initially may have little effect on the vision. But it can get larger, with time, eventually causing blindness.
- Cataracts can occur in one eye or both eyes.
- Cataracts usually occur in older people, but they can appear at any age, including infants.
- Cataracts can also be caused by injury to the eye.

Why Treat Cataract?
- Over time, the cataract blocks more and more light entering the eye, causing vision loss and eventually blindness.

Treatment
- There are no medications or traditional treatments that will make a cataract go away.
- The only way to treat a cataract is an operation to remove the clouded natural lens and replace it with an artificial lens.

[A cataract is like a dirty spot on a window. As this dirty spot becomes bigger, you can see less and less, until you can no longer see anything.]
What does it look like?
Patient Experience
Glaucoma - effect on visual field

Normal  Early Glaucoma

Advanced Glaucoma  Extreme Glaucoma

Diabetic Retinopathy

Normal  Early Diabetic Retinopathy

Advanced Diabetic Retinopathy  Extreme Diabetic Retinopathy
Anatomy
Cataract Surgery

- The patient is awake.
- The eye is not removed.
- The operation takes about 20 minutes.
- The patient will be administered anesthesia: topical or local or, in rare cases, general anesthesia.
- After the operation, there is a patch covering the eye.
- The patient must be seen, at the clinic, the day following surgery.
- The patient may go home the day of surgery, or may stay in the hospital, depending on their general health and how far they live from the clinic.
- The patch is removed the next day and the patient can immediately see.
Glaucoma

Real-world Explanations

Normal

Affected

Treated
Pediatric
Pediatric Eye Disorders and Treatment

Nasolacrimal Duct Obstruction

Retinoblastoma

Early

Late

Very Late
The Eye Pad

Patient________________________
Diagnosis_____________________
Treatment_____________________
Next Clinic visit: ____/____/______ No Visit [ ]
Clinic Contact_________________
Clinic Telephone________________
Notes: _________________________
E-Eye Book
The world should look like this:

If your world looks like this:

Cataract  Glaucoma

Diabetic Retinopathy  Refractive errors

Visit an eye care professional
Online interactive Simulator
## What you can do now

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Discuss communication with your team</th>
<th>Decide who will be responsible for communication with patients</th>
<th>Decide what is reasonable and doable in your setting</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Decide which practices you can adopt now</td>
<td>Practice these skills with your colleagues – do role plays</td>
<td>Give each other feedback</td>
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Communication & COVID-19

◊ Be prepared. Know the latest facts.
◊ Reinforce good hygiene. Be a role model.
◊ Multi-generational living – how do they protect those at high risk?
◊ Ask how they are coping. Encourage them to ask questions.
◊ Demonstrate respect to gain their trust.
◊ Determine barriers to care: financial, travel, stress.
◊ Use open questions!
Communication is a Team Activity
Summary

❖ Communication is the best treatment for the Misinformation Pandemic.

❖ Communication can ease many of the adverse affects of the COVID-19 crisis.

❖ Communication will facilitate patient care and improve outcomes.
The Mantra of Communication

Ask

Listen

Confirm
Your Comments and Questions
Thank you

Unlocking Possibilities