

# Effective Communication cum Counselling During Primary Eye Care: Systematic Review

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this review article was to compare the communication and counselling methods employed by various health care professionals (HCP) while dealing with their patients. Also, aim was to provide suggestions for proper patient counselling procedure to be used by eye care professionals. It has been observed that few optometrists do not communicate with patients in a proper manner which results in unsatisfied patient with management. Effective communication skills can be taught and improved through training and awareness. Communication is a means of advocacy that provides the avenue to which a positive impact can be made on the patients. This systematic review was done in order to compare the available methods of communication and counselling employed in case of nursing staff (interventional model) and pharmacists (three-stage approach which includes questionnaire, face to face sessions and workshops) and ophthalmologist (questionnaire based descriptive cross-sectional study) were compared. Patient satisfaction level scores were recorded for comparative analysis. The Mean satisfaction score of patients related to communication with HCP increased to  $80.8 \pm 4.5$  from  $40.8 \pm 4.3$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) in case of study-1 while in study-2, the counseling has been recognized as the effective tool for the patient satisfaction. Even with the best possible treatment, patients never get completely satisfied with management. Learning of patient communication skills is essential for the eye care professionals in order to understand patient needs. Effective communication and proper counseling are must for the patient satisfaction. This will in-turn help an eye care professional to

become best practitioner and professional in his field.

**Keywords-** Healthcare, Eye-care professional, Communication skills, Counseling, Patient management.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this review article was to compare the communication and counseling methods employed by various health care professionals (HCP) while dealing with their patients. Also, aim was to provide suggestions for proper patient counseling procedure to be used by eye care professionals. It has been observed that few optometrists do not communicate with patients in proper manner which results in unsatisfied patient with management. Effective communication skills can be taught and improved through training and awareness.

### Communication Skills

Effective communication skills can be taught and improved through training and awareness.<sup>1</sup>

Essentials for better communication:

- Patient – Practitioner relationship
- Understanding / Listening skill
- Body language
- Empathy and not sympathy
- Adequate skill of practice
- Confidence

### Communication

Communication is a mean of advocacy that provides the avenue to which a positive impact can be made on the patients.

Communication skills are the ability to use language (receptive), and express (expressive) information.

Key – factors:

- Effective Communication = high quality medical care
- 7 C’s of communication (Clear, Consideration, Confidence, Correct, Concrete, Control, Concise)
- Patient – Practitioner relationship building
- Improved patient outcomes

**Optometry & communication:**

-Management of Refractive Error and dispensing

- Spectacles
- Contact Lenses
- Refractive surgeries

-Counselling in Ocular diseases

-Management of Ocular diseases

-Low vision care

-Low vision therapies and aids

-Vision Therapy

-Paediatric care and counselling of parents

**Counselling**

Patient counselling is a broad term that describes the process of, exchange of information between patient and

practitioner, through which health care practitioners attempt to increase patient knowledge of health care issues.

What types of Behaviour needs for the counsellors?

1. Establish trust
2. Communicate verbally
3. Communicate non-verbally
4. Listen
5. Ask questions
6. Remain clinically objective
7. Show empathy and encouragement
8. Provide privacy and confidentiality
9. Tailor counselling to patient needs
10. Motivate Patient

**METHODOLOGY**

Systematic review was done in order to compare the available methods of communication and counselling employed in case of nursing staff (interventional model) and pharmacists (three-stage approach which includes questionnaire, face to face sessions and workshops) and ophthalmologist (questionnaire based descriptive cross-sectional study) were compared. Patient satisfaction level scores were recorded for comparative analysis.

**Comparison of the satisfaction levels**

Poonam Joshi et.al <sup>2</sup>	Amita A. Ahir et.al <sup>3</sup>	Ifeoma R et.al <sup>4</sup>
1. An Interventional study was conducted in a level-3 NICU of a tertiary care hospital from Feb.-April 2017 in AIIMS New Delhi.	A Non-Interventional study was conducted Sep.-Oct. 2015 in AIP, Vita, Maharashtra.	An Interventional study was conducted in University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Enugu, Nigeria ,Oct. 2014
2. This quality improvement was conducted to improve the communication between HCP and Parents. (Parents were mainly mothers).	The Community pharmacist scenario design followed a three-stage approach.	This was a descriptive cross-sectional study administered to 307 consecutive consenting patients.
3. Baseline data collection was done from 5 mothers using a pre-validated semi-structured communication satisfaction tool, followed by two focus group discussion with the group of mothers and HCP.	The first stage comprised thinking of relevant questions to be addressed and definition of the scenarios horizon.	The questionnaire asked questions regarding satisfaction with the time spent in the clinic, attitude of various categories of staff, cleanliness of the clinic.
4. The total satisfaction score of the parents ranged from 0-40, there were two open ended questions.	The second stage comprised two face-to-face, scenario building workshops, for which 10 experts from practice and academic setting were invited.	The level of satisfaction for each question was graded from points 1-5.
5. The collected data was coded, enter in excel sheet and analyzed using SPSS 23.00. Parents satisfaction score before and after the PDSA cycles were analyzed using independent ‘t’ test.	The first workshop was meant for context analysis and design of draft scenarios, while the second was aimed at scenario analysis and validation	The collected were cleaned and double entered into a computer at the end of each day. Data entry and analysis were done using Statistical Package for social sciences version 17.
6. A ‘p’ value of < 0.05 was considered as significant.	The final scenarios were built merging workshops’ information with data collected from scientific literature followed by team consensus	Chicago, Illinois, USA, all statistical calculations were done at the significance of P < 0.05; Chi-square was used for the test of significance.

The Mean satisfaction score of patients related to communication with HCP increased to 80.8 ± 4.5 from 40.8 ± 4.3 (p < 0.05) and continued to show sustained

results (91.3±4.8) one month following the completion of the QI project in case of study-1 while in study-2, the counseling has been recognized as the effective tool for the patient satisfaction. Although, we give the best treatment to the patients, but they will not completely satisfied with our management. Further research is needed to explore whether and how one should develop an effective communication and counseling framework relevant to Indian Scenario.

## CONCLUSION

Learning of patient communication skills is essential for the eye care professionals in order to understand patient needs. Effective communication and proper counseling are must for the patient satisfaction. This will in-turn help an eye care professional to become best practitioner and professional in their own (optometry) field. Counseling improves the quality of service and builds the confidence of patients, which in turn increases motivation in the community to receive proper eye care services rather than going to quacks. Eye is very vital part of the human body everybody needs proper guidance and service to save it. Good counseling can not only benefit the patient but can also improve the reputation and recognition of the hospital which will have a good social impact and in the ultimate growth of hospital.<sup>5</sup>

- Patient recognizes the importance of the well-being of their eyes
- Encourage the patient to establish a working relationship with the practitioner & foundation for continual interaction and consultation
- Improve the coping strategies to deal with a disease, therapy or medication

- Motivate the patient to take medicine or therapy for improvement of his/her health status
- The patient should become an informed, efficient and active participant in disease treatment and self-care management
- Develop the ability in patient to take appropriate decisions and management with the help of a practitioner

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