



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Definition

- Communication skill is the exchange of information or ideas between a pharmacist and the patient or caregiver. A good communication makes the treatment easier and improves patient compliance.
- Types of communication:
 - a) Verbal communication
 - b) Non-verbal communication

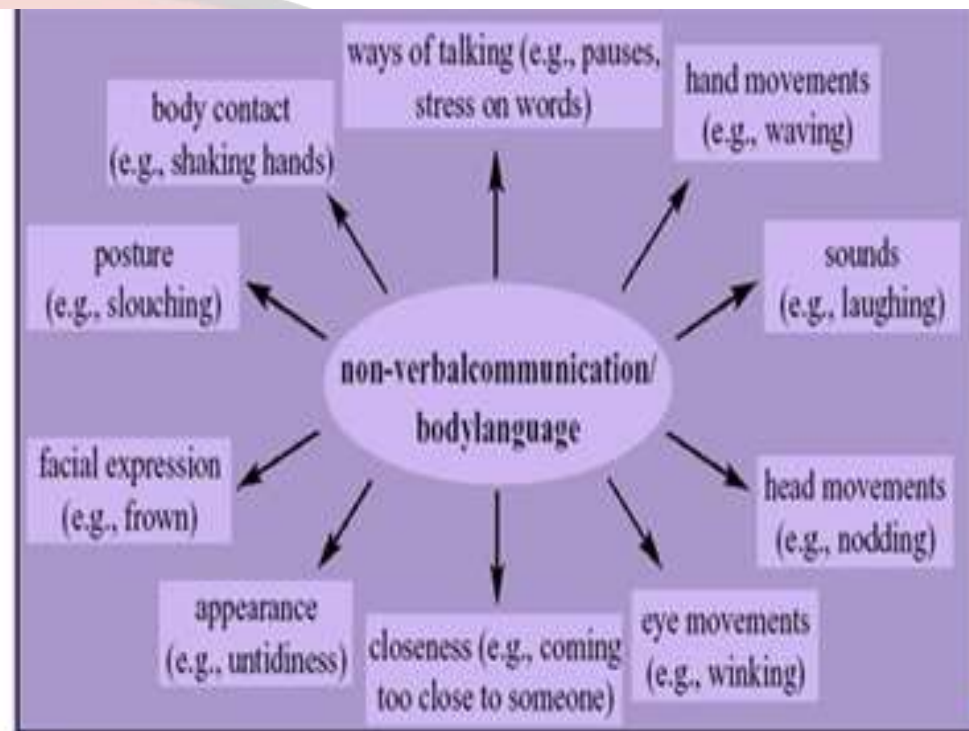
Verbal communication:-

- It is the communication using words or speech between the pharmacist and the patient. Language plays an important role in the Verbal communication. It makes exchange of information easier. It is the most common method of communication between healthcare provider and the patient.

Non verbal communication:

- It is the exchange of information or ideas using gestures, facial expression, eye movements, postures, body movements, etc. It is useful for disabled people, child or elderly people that have difficulty in hearing or understanding verbal language.

Non verbal communication



These Expressions:

Leaning back in a chair, yawning, looking at a clock, shifting or shuffling feet

Smiling, nodding agreement, keeping eye contact, leaning forward

Avoiding eye contact, frowning, scratching head, pursing lips

May Indicate:

Boredom, fatigue, disinterest, impatience

Interest, enthusiasm, agreement, humor

Confusion, disagreement, suppressing thoughts or feelings, anger, suspicion

Types of non-verbal communication

- ❖ **Gestures:** Expression using hand or head is known as gesture. Gesture uses different signs using hand and other body parts.
- ❖ **Facial expression:** Facial expression express the mood and emotion with the eyes and mouth giving the dominant signs.
- ❖ **Eye contact:** Eye contact encourages patient to express and continue the communication whereas avoiding eye contact makes communication gap.
- ❖ **Physical contact:** Physical contact is one of the means of pleading to what is spoken however cultural variation should be accounted.
- ❖ **Body posture:** Different body postures with different meanings allow patient to communicate easily without words.

Elements of effective communication with patients (Interaction with patient)

1. Patient titles

- i. Address patient properly. Ask patient how he/she wants to be addressed
- ii. Confused, disoriented or sedated persons better to be addressed by first name

2. Respect for the Patient

- i. Respond to patient as a person not a prescription user
- ii. Maintain professionalism
- iii. Avoid exchange of personal information
- iv. Don't pass judgment

3. Questioning Techniques

- i. Open-ended
- ii. Rapid sequence of question
- iii. Don't interrupt patient

Elements of effective communication with patients (Interaction with patient)

5. Patient Instruction

- i. Assess patient need
- ii. Control the amount of the information given
- iii. Assess patient learning
- iv. Determine patient objectives

6. Appreciating Differences in an Individual's Perspective

a. Patient may be concerned about:

- i. the seriousness of their illness
- ii. talking about an embarrassing condition
- iii. undergoing treatment
- iv. how the illness will affect their quality of life or their family
- v. not making themselves understood
- vi. not being able to understand the clinician's response
- vii. wasting the clinician's time

Elements of effective communication with patients (Interaction with patient)

b. Clinician may be focused on:

- i. time constraints
- ii. taking a case history
- iii. starting treatment as soon as possible
- iv. their own lack of knowledge
- v. the symptoms, signs and underlying pathology
- vi. assumptions based on previous visits

7. Medical Jargons

- Translate commonly used pharmacy and medical terminology to lay terminology Avoid slangs

Communication with the health professional

Effective communication between pharmacist and physicians, nurses and other pharmacists is essential.

☐ Pharmacist- Physician Communication:

- a. Pharmacist-Physician Communication Often have trouble communicating
 - Both are busy professionals
 - Some RPh intimidated by MD
- b. Be prepared with specific questions or facts and recommendations when initiating a patient care- related conversation with physicians.
- c. Choose the right time and place for conversation.
- d. Follow the chain of command.
- e. Don't interrupt physician-patient, physician- teaching unless needed.
- f. When addressed by question, listen carefully, assess information, ask additional questions until clear about situation.

B. Pharmacist-Nurse Communication

- ☐ Often have trouble communicating
- ☐ Most communications occur because of errors in dispensing, distribution or administration.
- ☐ Telephone is the primary communicating media
- ☐ Show mutual respect Communicate clearly, timely.

C. Pharmacist-Pharmacist Communication

- Clear communication of patient information during shift switch.
- Direct communication between consulting pharmacist and the pharmacist on the patient care team.
- Community and institutionalized pharmacists rarely communicate

Process of Communication

Definition

- It is an art of sending information, idea & attitudes from one person to another. It is a process of interaction between humans.
- Communication skills are the abilities used while giving and receiving different kinds of information.
- Communication skills involve listening, speaking, observing and empathizing.

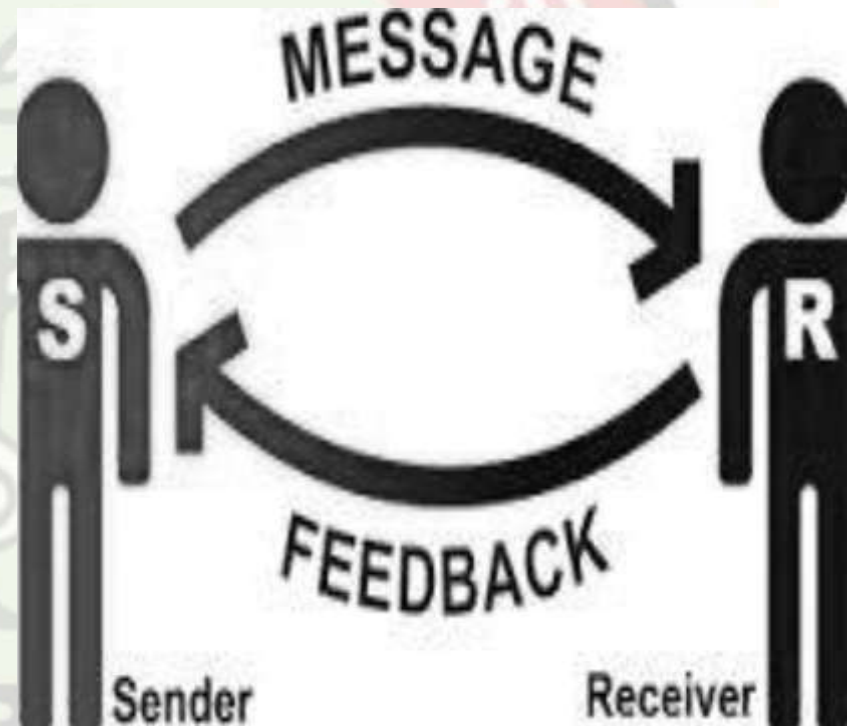


Figure 1-Process of Communication

Importance of Communication Skills

1.Importance of Communication Skills in Life

Good communication skills in life will ensure everyone around you understands you and you understand them.

- It will be easy for you to make and keep friends.
- You will have a good relationship with your spouse, kids, family members and friends.
- Your daily functioning will be at its optimal best.
- Your daily chores and errands will also happen at their optimal best.
- You will have less stress, because poor communication also leads to a lot of mental stress.

2. Importance of Communication Skills for Students:

One of the biggest reasons why many students suffer is because of poor communication skills. It affects their functioning in schools and colleges and also affects their ability to understand what the teacher is teaching. Hence, as a student, you need to develop your communication skills because:-

- It will help you communicate with teachers on things you have a tough time understanding.
- It will help you build relationships with your fellow students.
- Your grades will improve as these skills help with studying and revision.
- You will have much less mental stress compared to other students only because you are a better communicator.

3. Importance of Communication Skills for Professionals

- The workplace is the most commonplace for miscommunication, and it could have serious repercussions on your career. Therefore, as a professional, you need to have excellent communication skills. They will also help you in:-
 - Doing your job well. Good communication skills have a direct impact on how well you perform.
 - Develop yourself as a leader in the workplace which will bring in opportunities to grow and move up.
 - Build good relations and camaraderie with all your fellow employees.
 - Naturally, command respect from your colleagues and even your bosses
 - Improved body language.
 - Zero to minimal professional life stress as you will be doing well.

Types of Communication skills

1. Verbal Communication skills

- **Face to face** Communication
- **Over the telephone** Communication

2. Non-Verbal Communication skills

- **Body language**
- **Written** Communication skills

Verbal Communication Skills

Verbal communication is the use of words to share information to other people. It include both oral & written communication.

Tips to achieve effective verbal communication:

- Gather your thoughts and choose your words.
- Be precise and use simple language (language in which both parties are fluent and comfortable).
- Listen carefully and concentrate.
- Use of body language, eye contacts, posture etc.
- Do not produce fear or anxiety in patient.
- Be relaxed and demonstrate that you care for patient.

Advantages of Verbal Communication

- It saves time
- It is quick in obtaining feedback once delivered.
- It provides complete understanding of communication delivered
- It is more reliable method of communication.
- It is flexible and effective for all.
- It is cheaper way of communication and hence saves money.



Disadvantages of Verbal Communication

- Emotions are visible and hence lead to trouble in certain cases.
- It has no legal validity and hence will lead to problems in certain situations.
- It does not provide permanent record unless it is recorded with modern means of storage.
- It has issues when communicating with distant people.
- It is difficult for certain people to understand speech due to various speech tones used in verbal communication.
- This form of communication is not suitable for lengthy message.
- There is chance of leak of secret information
- There is a chance of misunderstanding in verbal communication.

Face to Face (One to One) Communication

Communication between one sender & one receiver at one time is termed as one-to-one communication. One-to-one communication is known as Face-to-face communication.

Here the sender and receiver discuss and argue on the important points on-the-spot by directly communicating with each other.

This kind of communication helps the receiver to gain more understanding about the sender's intentions by thoroughly analyzing his eye contact patterns and body language.

Objectives of one-to-one communication

- Build personal relationships; establish trust. (People connect to other people).
- Achieve a greater understanding of key information
- Provide actual information, inoculate, and take care of questions arises and objections.
- Inspire people to take some action (vote, join, attend, etc.)
- Eliminate fear
- They improve productivity

Effective one-to-one communication requires following skills:

1. Listening skills
2. Information-giving skills
3. Questioning skills.

Communication Over the Telephone

Telephone communication is one of the most important forms of communication. Although today its use is being replaced by other forms of communication such as email, mobile phones.

A telephonic communication is a type of spoken conversation which is happened between two-person, within which the two person share their idea and feelings to each other.

In another words, communication that's happening between **two individuals** by using **telephone** is term as a telephonic communication.

Tips to achieve effective telephonic communication

- Pharmacist should first introduced themselves by name and state the purpose of the call.
- When Pharmacist answering the calls ask for callers identity & reason for calling.
- Pharmacist should Speak clearly & slowly, listen carefully, be attentive.
- Pharmacist should state facts clearly and calmly.
- Pharmacist should take efforts to deal with the calls immediately.
- Pharmacist should avoid putting the other person on hold.

Effective one-to-one communication requires following skills;

- Listening: Listening is not the same thing as hearing. It is an active process that requires both hearing and thinking.
- Questioning: Questioning is a systematic process that enables you to discover information.

Advantages

- Easy and fast to use.
- Easy available mode of communication.
- Saves time and energy.
- We get immediate feedback to things we say.
- The conversation is relatively private between us and the caller.
- We can call someone anywhere on the planet. Distance is not a matter



Disadvantages

- Lack of non-verbal communication.
- Difficult to discuss visual materials and objects.
- The sound of voice has to keep higher pitched than normal.
- The person must be available to take your telephone call.
- The line might be engaged when we call so we can't speak to the person when we want
- We generally have to pay for every minute we spend on the call. In the case of overseas calls, that can be expensive.

2. Non-Verbal Communication skills

Nonverbal communication is **"the act of conveying information without the use of words"**.

The nonverbal component refers to the message we send through our body language, this might involve using certain facial expressions or hand gestures to make a specific point, or it could involve the use of eye contact, physical proximity and overall behavior.

Advantages

- Reduces wastage of time
- Quicker transmission of messages
- Impactful and effective
- Useful for specially abled people and also for illiterate people

Disadvantages

- Might Distort information
- Meaning varies across cultures
- Long conversations are not possible
- Imprecise and vague

Body language

- Body language is a use of non verbal signs to express or convey the information. Such behavior includes facial expressions, body posture, gestures, eye movement, touch and the use of space.
- According to **Albert Mehrabian**, non-verbal communication contributes to more than half of the message being sent. This suggests that over 50% of the message communication is done by conveying messages through body language.

Types of body language

Positive body language

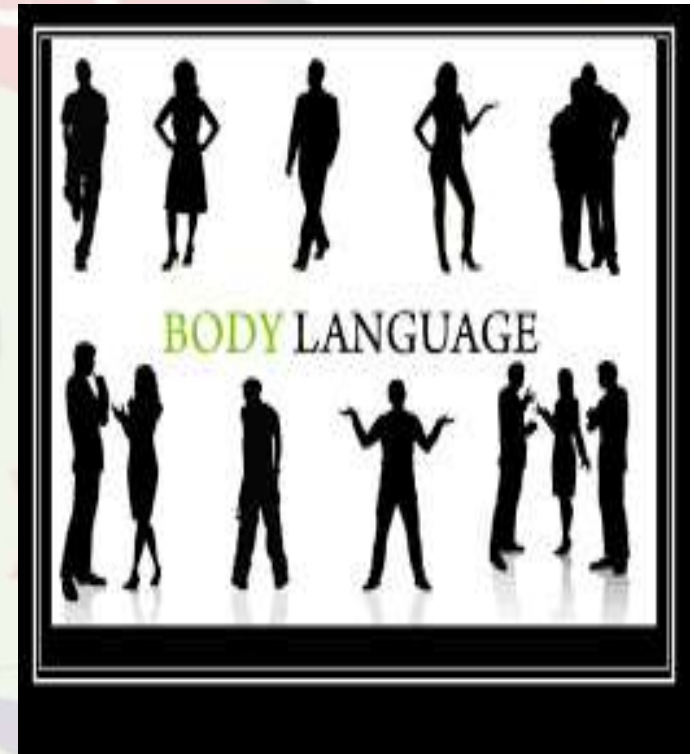
1. Eye contact and facial expressions.
2. Body movements.
3. Use of hands.
4. Body posture.

Negative body language

- Poor or no eye to eye contact.
- Blankly staring audience.
- Resting against wall.
- Not keeping the body still and firm.
- Putting both the hands in the pockets conveys a casual approach.

Tips for Effective use of body language

1. Standing firmly and giving power pose
i.e. spreading arms out or upwards boost
the confidence..
2. Increase the energy level.
3. Act as super model for reducing conflict.
4. Never raise arms over the shoulders.
5. Perform naturally and communicate in
better way.
6. Making eye contact, appear attentive.



Written Communication skills

Written communications skills are those skills that use written words for conveying of a message to other persons.

It differs from verbal communication in that it is words spoken rather than noted down.

Types of Written Communication:

A. Formal written communication

Examples:

Emails

Letters

Contracts

Briefs

Memos

Meeting agendas

Bulletins

B. Informal written communication

Examples: Personal letter

Advantages of Written Communication:

- Easy to preserve
- Easy presentation of complex matter
- Permanent record
- Prevention of wastage of time and money
- Use as a reference
- Delegation of authority
- Effective communication

Disadvantages of written communication:

- Expensive
- Time consuming
- Difficult to maintain secrecy
- Lack of flexibility
- Delay in response
- Cost in record keeping
- Complex words
- Lack of direct relation

COMMUNICATION SKILLS ADOPTED BY PHARMACIST/ VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Active Listening

Speaking

Observation and Assessment

Reading

Language

Questioning

Non-verbal communication skills

- Facial expressions
- Hand gestures
- Eye movements and contact
- Head tilts
- Posture and body movements
- Manner of walking
- Touching the face or hair
- Way of talking
- Space
- Touching the other person

INTERACTIONS WITH PROFESSIONALS AND PATIENTS

Interaction with patients

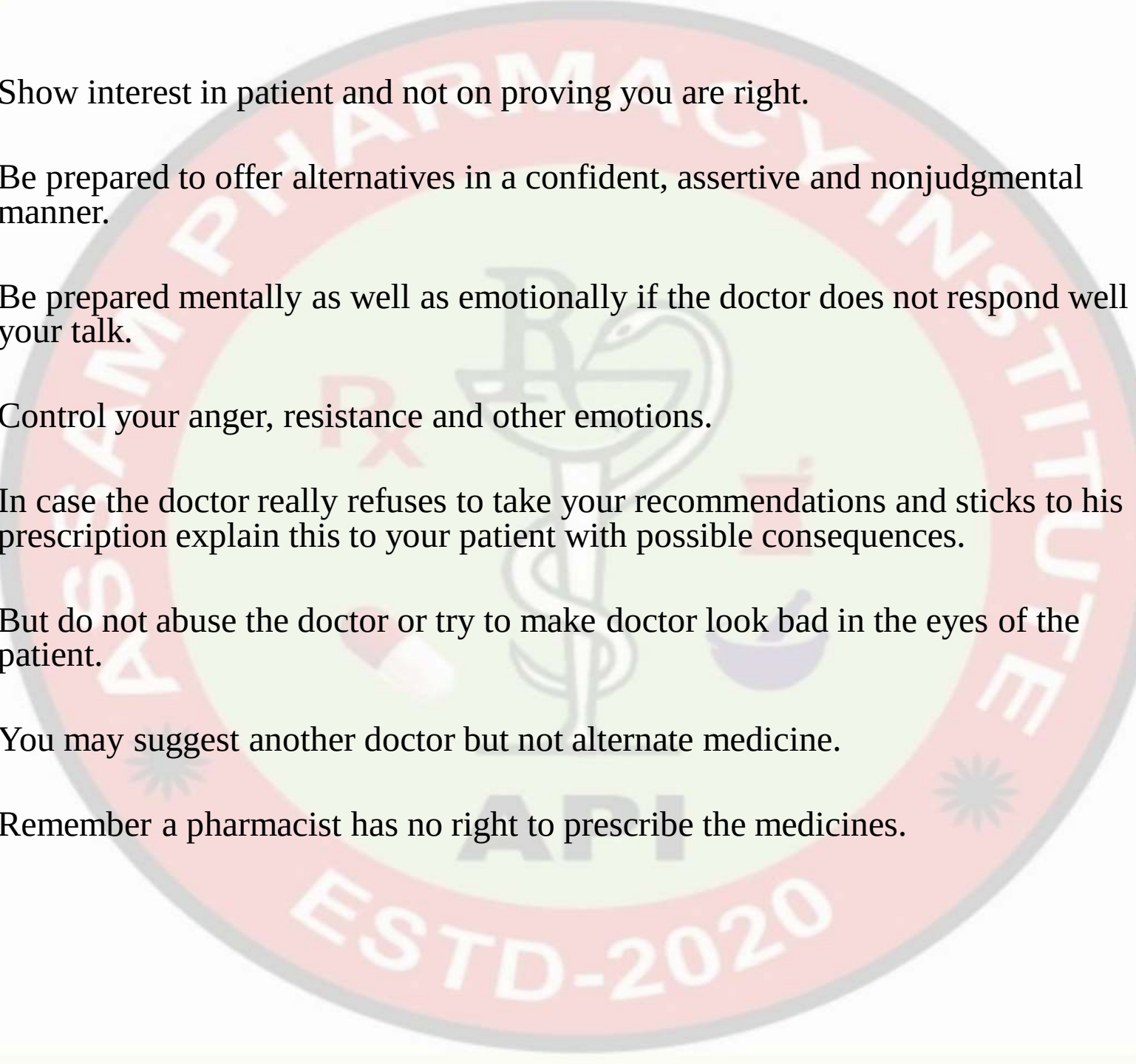
- The 'Pharmaceutical Care' is the goal of the pharmacy profession throughout the world.
- Pharmaceutical care needs much more familiar and in-depth relationship between the pharmacist and the patient.
- The first step that is required to implement pharmaceutical care is patient counseling.
- The pharmacist must identify real and potential healthcare problems of the patient through the interaction.
- The first step of this is winning the patient's confidence by talking to him. Effective interaction is not simply providing information.
- Interaction is a two-way process, a pharmacist organizes information to be provided to the patient and additionally from the patient also he gets information.
- Interaction with patient is therefore an active process of exchange of information where a pharmacist gives vital information about the medicine, its treatment regimen, its therapeutic outcomes.
- The patient needs to give information to the pharmacist about his daily routine, his feelings about his illness and his description about feeling better with the prescribed medicine.

Interaction with professionals (Doctors)

The basis of pharmaceutical care is collaborative relationship with different healthcare professionals, particularly the doctors. Other than patients, a community pharmacist has to interact with doctors, especially doctors of the patient. In this interaction focus is on preventing and solving drug related problems of the patient.

Following points keep in mind during the interaction with doctors.

- A community pharmacist usually calls on doctor behalf of his patient for reason like uncontrolled condition in patient, like fever not coming down, uncontrolled vomiting etc. which need immediate therapy.
- First thing to remember is that talk should be focused on solving the problem or issue of the patient and not on people.
- When community pharmacist make call to the healthcare professionals i.e. doctors he should be prepare with his thoughts (in written form) in organize manner.
- Don't waste the time of doctor, otherwise doctor will confused about whatyou wanted to convey him.
- Get details from patient about the problem as he sees it.

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- The background of the slide features a large, circular watermark logo for Ashwini Pharmacy Institute. The logo is light red and contains a central emblem with a caduceus (a staff with two snakes and wings) and a mortar and pestle. The text "ASHWINI PHARMACY INSTITUTE" is written in a circular path around the emblem, and "ESTD-2020" is written at the bottom. The text "API" is also visible in the center.
- Show interest in patient and not on proving you are right.
 - Be prepared to offer alternatives in a confident, assertive and nonjudgmental manner.
 - Be prepared mentally as well as emotionally if the doctor does not respond well to your talk.
 - Control your anger, resistance and other emotions.
 - In case the doctor really refuses to take your recommendations and sticks to his prescription explain this to your patient with possible consequences.
 - But do not abuse the doctor or try to make doctor look bad in the eyes of the patient.
 - You may suggest another doctor but not alternate medicine.
 - Remember a pharmacist has no right to prescribe the medicines.

Patient Interview Techniques

- Patient interviewing is an essential skill that pharmacists need to develop. Pharmacist can design and use various forms for interviewing patients. In order to understand the patient's health problems, pharmacist should maintain professional attitude by following specific interviewing procedures that will enhance the effectiveness of the interview
- The components of an effective interview include active listening, probing, asking sensitive questions, taking pauses, keeping silence and establishing rapport.
- Pharmacist should be a good observer throughout the interview because there may be many nonverbal behavioral traits that reveal a patient's personality, anxieties and apprehensions.

Use of Non-verbal communications include components such:

- Pitch & tone of voice
- Sequential phrasing of statements
- Facial expression
- Posture of the body
- Movement of the hands.

Tips used to conduct effective Patient Interview

- Greet the patient with smile and introduce yourself.
- Explain the purpose and process of interview.
- Conduct patient interview in isolated consultation area within the pharmacy.
- Explain what you will do with information collected and assure to maintain confidentiality.
- Let patient know how long the interview will last.
- Maintain professionalism during interview.
- Pay attention to your body language.
- Ask open-ended questions. Begin with general question and then get more specific.
- Use active listening skills demonstrate empathy.
- Ask patient to restate any unclear information.
- Communication at an appropriate educational level and avoid medical jargon.
- Pharmacist should take consideration patient's mental status to gain information during interview.
- During interview pharmacist need ask many questions in order to properly assess the patient. Therefore, he should know what questions to ask.