**Barriers to healthcare professional-patient communication**

**Introduction**

Healthcare communication is a critical part of providing quality care to patients. The ability for healthcare professionals to communicate effectively with patients and their families can have a significant impact on patient satisfaction, outcomes and adherence to treatment regimens. However, effective communication requires more than just mutual understanding between the provider and patient; it also requires trust and mutual respect between each party. Trust can be developed through interactions that allow patients to feel comfortable expressing themselves freely without fear of judgment or ridicule from their providers.

**What is healthcare professional-patient communication?**

Healthcare professional-patient communication is a process of communication that occurs between healthcare professionals and patients. It encompasses all forms of interaction that are used to convey information to the patient during their medical treatment, including oral, written, visual and non-verbal methods such as body language.

The purpose of healthcare professional-patient communication is to ensure that the patient understands their diagnosis and treatment plan, as well as any risks and benefits associated with it. This can be difficult when there are multiple parties involved in a person’s care (such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other specialists) who all have different roles to play in the process. Healthcare professional-patient communication is vital for ensuring that patients receive the best possible care. It can be challenging, however, especially when patients are unsure of what they have been told or are unable to ask questions due to language barriers. In order to overcome these challenges and improve patient outcomes, it is important that healthcare professionals know how to effectively communicate with their patients.

**1. Describe barriers to healthcare professional-patient communication that impede therapeutic communication and positive patient outcomes.**

Communication barriers are any factors that impede successful communication between the healthcare professional and patient (Vidhi, 2022). Barriers to communication include language, culture, and education. Language can be a barrier if the patient is not a native English speaker; for example, many Asian patients in America are not fluent in English. Similarly, culture can be a barrier if the patient comes from another country; for example, an Indian immigrant may find it difficult to relate to American healthcare professionals who do not understand his or her cultural practices or beliefs.

Patients' lack of knowledge about their health conditions also poses a potential barrier to effective communication between them and their doctors. Many patients do not know enough about their conditions because they have not been educated sufficiently regarding them by their doctors prior to diagnosis (Bitzer & Bitzer 2010). As such they may fail to provide relevant information during visits with health professionals or ask questions that could help them better understand what is happening with their bodies (eHealth Literacy 2013).

**2. Compare ways to improve the effectiveness of communication with patients.**

Barrier 1: The patient is older and has hearing or visual impairments.

Improvement: Increase the volume of your voice, use hand gestures to illustrate what you're saying, and make sure to speak slowly and clearly.

Example: “I want to make sure that we understand each other, so please tell me if I'm speaking too fast or unclearly."

Dr. 1: The patient has a serious condition and you want to make sure they understand the severity of their condition. Improvement: Ask your patient to tell you what they've been told about their condition, then compare the information with what you know about it. This will help you to determine whether the patient is getting accurate information and if they understand it. If not, explain things in a different way or refer them to another health professional who can provide more information. Example: “I want to make sure that we're on the same page about your condition."

**Conclusion**

The key to improving healthcare professional-patient communication is for healthcare professionals to be more aware of the barriers that make it difficult to communicate with patients. They should also know how to avoid these barriers and use effective communication techniques in order to facilitate better care for their patients. The next time you're having a difficult conversation with a patient, don't let it get in the way of providing good care. Instead, try using these effective communication techniques to help make your patients feel heard and understood.

## Reference

Vidhi, V. S. (2022, August 22). *What are communication barriers & how to overcome them- talent economy*. ShineLearning. Retrieved November 18, 2022, from https://learning.shine.com/talenteconomy/career-help/communication-barriers-and-how-to-overcome-them/