

The communication problems and improvement paths between doctors and patients in the medical service system

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the problems in communication between doctors and patients in the current medical service system, and analyzes the reasons for these problems. By sorting out the current situation and challenges of doctor-patient communication, some effective improvement paths have been proposed, aiming to promote trust and cooperation between doctors and patients, and improve the quality of medical services. The article further explores the application and optimization strategies of doctor-patient communication in different medical environments, in order to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for future healthcare service system reforms.

KEYWORDS

medical services; Doctor-patient communication; Communication barriers; Improvement path; Medical Quality

1 Introduction

Doctor patient communication is a key link in the medical service system, which has a profound impact on medical quality, patient satisfaction, and treatment effectiveness. However, there are still many problems in current doctor-patient communication, such as communication barriers and lack of trust, which seriously affect the effectiveness of medical services and patients' medical experience. With the complexity of the medical environment and the diversification of patient needs, communication issues between doctors and patients have become increasingly prominent. This article aims to explore the communication issues between doctors and patients in the medical service system, analyze their root causes, propose improvement paths, and provide theoretical basis and practical guidance for improving the quality of medical services and building harmonious doctor-patient relationships.

2 The current situation and problems of communication between doctors and patients in the medical service system

2.1 Manifestations of communication barriers between doctors and patients

The communication barriers between doctors and patients mainly manifest in poor communication, incomplete information transmission, and difficulties in patient understanding. In the medical process, the transmission of information between doctors and patients is often constrained by various factors. Firstly, due to the time constraints and rapid diagnosis and treatment process, doctors often lack sufficient time to communicate with patients. This has resulted in doctors being unable to have a detailed understanding of the patient's condition, and patients being unable to receive adequate medical advice. Secondly, the use of professional terminology and complex medical knowledge make it difficult for patients to understand treatment plans or disease progression, resulting in asymmetric information transmission. In addition, due to the emotional fluctuations or cultural differences of patients, misunderstandings may arise between doctors and patients during communication, greatly reducing the effectiveness of information transmission. Communication barriers also manifest as patients' suspicion and rejection of treatment plans, especially in some chronic or severe patients who have low trust in medical plans and are prone to resistance. In short, communication barriers between doctors and patients are commonly present in the medical process, seriously affecting the effectiveness of medical services and patient satisfaction.

2.2 Factors influencing doctor-patient communication issues

The formation of doctor-patient communication problems is not caused by a single factor, but involves multiple factors. Firstly, the medical environment is one of the important factors that affect communication. The noisy hospital environment, excessive patient flow, and high work pressure on doctors have squeezed the communication time and space between doctors and patients. Doctors often can only make diagnosis and treatment decisions for patients in a short period of time, lacking opportunities to establish deep relationships with patients. Secondly, the professional and communication skills of medical personnel directly affect the effectiveness of communication. Although many doctors

have a high level of expertise in the medical field, they lack patience and effective communication skills in communicating with patients, which makes it difficult for patients to understand or accept diagnosis and treatment advice. Furthermore, factors such as the patient's own emotions, knowledge level, and cultural background can also affect the effectiveness of communication. Especially when facing major illnesses or unknown conditions, patients are prone to negative emotions such as anxiety and fear, which can affect their cognitive and information reception abilities. In addition, issues such as medical expenses and expected treatment outcomes may also lead patients to develop a sense of distrust towards doctors, which in turn can affect communication between both parties.

2.3 Lack of trust in doctor-patient communication

Lack of trust is one of the most fundamental issues in doctor-patient communication. The trust relationship between doctors and patients not only affects the patient's acceptance of the doctor's treatment plan, but also directly affects the patient's psychological state and treatment cooperation. Currently, the lack of trust between doctors and patients is mainly manifested in the following aspects: firstly, the frequent occurrence of medical accidents and the increase in medical disputes have led to a gradual decline in patients' trust in doctors and hospitals. Patients often worry that doctors may provide unreasonable treatment recommendations for personal gain, leading to suspicion of medical behavior. Secondly, some patients may experience disappointment and anger when seeking medical treatment due to high expectations that do not match the diagnosis and treatment plan between doctors, leading to the breakdown of trust relationships. In addition, doctors may not fully understand the needs of patients in communication, or lack sufficient empathy when expressing treatment plans, which makes patients feel neglected or disrespected, further exacerbating the problem of lack of trust. The lack of trust not only makes patients doubt the effectiveness of treatment, but may also lead to tension in the doctor-patient relationship, affecting the effectiveness of treatment.

3 Root cause analysis of communication problems between doctors and patients

3.1 Imbalance of medical resources and communication barriers

The imbalance of medical resources is one of the important root causes of communication problems between doctors and patients. Our country's medical resources are mainly concentrated in hospitals in big cities and first tier cities, especially large comprehensive hospitals, while the medical resources of grassroots medical institutions are relatively scarce. This imbalance has led to patients flowing to large hospitals, causing problems such as crowded outpatient clinics, imbalanced doctor-patient ratios, and excessive work pressure on doctors. In large hospitals, doctors usually face a huge workload and tight treatment time, with a large number of patients and short contact time between each doctor and patient. This makes it difficult for doctors to have sufficient communication with every patient, and many patients are unable to fully understand their condition and treatment plan in a short period of time. This not only affects patients' trust in treatment, but also exacerbates communication barriers between doctors and patients. In grassroots hospitals, due to the relatively low experience and professional level of doctors, and the lack of professional communication skills, patients' doubts and problems are often not effectively resolved, and the quality of communication further declines. In addition, insufficient medical resources have led to the backwardness of medical equipment and technology, which makes doctors face more uncertain factors in the treatment process. This situation often causes patients to experience more anxiety and distrust, exacerbating communication difficulties. In short, the imbalance of medical resources poses more challenges to doctor-patient communication, and it is urgent to improve the supply structure of medical services through rational allocation of resources.

3.2 Insufficient quality and communication skills of medical personnel

The role of doctors in medical services is not only the executor of medical technology, but also the supporter of patients' psychology. However, in reality, many medical personnel lack effective communication skills and humanistic care awareness, leading to obstacles in doctor-patient communication. Many medical training systems focus on the cultivation of clinical skills, but the training of communication skills and emotional intelligence for medical staff is relatively weak. Doctors often place too much emphasis on the transmission of medical knowledge when communicating with patients, while neglecting their psychological feelings and emotional needs. For example, doctors may use too many medical terms when explaining the condition, which can make it difficult for patients to understand and lead to anxiety or misunderstandings. When patients face their own or their family's illness, they often feel nervous or fearful. At this time, doctors need to provide more empathetic communication methods to help patients eliminate doubts and relieve emotions. However, due to the tight pace of medical work and insufficient manpower, doctors often do not have enough time and energy to pay attention to patients' emotional needs, leading to communication barriers between doctors and

patients. At the same time, some doctors lack the ability to establish a trusting relationship with patients, and may overlook the emotional needs or expressions of patients, thereby exacerbating conflicts between doctors and patients. In response to this issue, hospitals should strengthen the training of medical staff, not only to improve their professional skills, but also to focus on cultivating their communication skills and emotional management abilities, helping doctors better interact with patients during the medical process and improve the quality of medical services.

3.3 The Influence of Patient Emotions and Psychological States

The emotions and psychological state of patients play a crucial role in the process of doctor-patient communication. Faced with diseases, patients often bear enormous psychological pressure, especially when facing major illnesses, long-term treatment, or uncertain diagnoses. Negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, and helplessness can easily affect their acceptance of doctor's advice. The emotional fluctuations of patients may lead to their inability to rationally listen to the doctor's advice, thereby affecting the effectiveness of treatment. In addition, the psychological state of patients can also affect their way of expression and the transmission of information. In situations of tension, anxiety, or unease, patients may not be able to clearly express their condition and needs, and may also misunderstand or doubt the doctor's explanations. This emotional distress not only increases the difficulty of communication, but may also lead to patients' distrust and even refusal of the doctor's treatment plan. The fluctuation of patients' emotions and psychological pressure are often reflected in the ward or clinic. If medical staff fail to effectively identify and handle patients' emotional states, it often leads to poor communication effectiveness. Therefore, when communicating with patients, doctors should not only focus on conveying the condition and explaining the treatment plan, but also have strong psychological counseling abilities. By understanding patients' emotions, providing appropriate psychological comfort and support, and helping them alleviate negative emotions such as anxiety and fear, it can help improve the effectiveness of doctor-patient communication. Hospitals can help patients better adjust their psychological state and promote the smooth progress of the treatment process by establishing psychological support teams and providing psychological counseling.

4 Improvement path and countermeasures for doctor-patient communication

4.1 Enhance communication training and quality improvement of medical personnel

Improving the communication skills of medical personnel is one of the key paths to solving communication barriers between doctors and patients. Currently, the communication skills of medical personnel are often not given sufficient attention, and traditional medical education mainly focuses on training medical knowledge and clinical skills, neglecting communication skills with patients. Therefore, hospitals should establish a systematic communication training system and regularly conduct communication skills training courses for medical staff, especially to cultivate doctors' listening skills, emotional resonance, and emotional management abilities. In terms of training content, it should cover how to establish trust relationships with patients, how to explain medical plans, and how to deal with patients' emotional fluctuations. Meanwhile, the practical abilities of medical personnel can be enhanced through role-playing, simulated communication, and other methods. In addition to professional skills, it is also necessary to strengthen the humanistic care awareness of medical staff, emphasize the patient-centered service concept, enhance their empathy and patience, and enable them to better communicate with patients in complex medical environments.

4.2 Application of Innovative Communication Modes and Technologies

With the development of technology, innovative communication modes and technological means provide new opportunities for improving doctor-patient communication. Hospitals can improve communication efficiency and effectiveness by introducing modern information technology methods. For example, an electronic health record (EHR) system can help doctors obtain real-time patient medical history information and treatment records, thereby reducing communication barriers caused by information asymmetry. At the same time, using the Internet and mobile applications, hospitals can provide online consultation platforms for patients to facilitate non face-to-face communication between patients and doctors. Through remote video conferencing, patients and doctors can communicate more conveniently and efficiently across geographical and time constraints. In addition, the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data technology can also help doctors more accurately interpret patients' symptoms, medical records, and other information, thereby providing personalized treatment plans. Innovative communication models can not only improve various problems in traditional communication, but also enhance patient satisfaction and treatment compliance. In the future, hospitals should actively explore and apply these advanced technologies to promote the digital transformation of doctor-patient communication.

4.3 Improving the medical environment and optimizing processes

Improving the medical environment and processes is another important path to enhance the quality of doctor-patient communication. In the current healthcare system, the medical treatment process in hospitals is complex, and patients need to travel between various departments, which not only increases the psychological burden on patients, but also hinders effective communication between doctors and patients. To optimize this process, hospitals can improve communication efficiency by simplifying processes and reducing unnecessary steps. For example, by implementing one-stop services, patients can more conveniently access various medical services they need during the consultation process, reduce waiting time, thereby reducing anxiety and improving communication enthusiasm. At the same time, improving the medical environment is also crucial. Hospitals should create a more warm and comfortable medical environment, reduce noise and crowding, provide more rest space to help patients relax and reduce emotional fluctuations. By optimizing the environment and processes, patients can receive higher quality services during the medical process, which will provide more ideal conditions for doctor-patient communication.

4.4 Enhancing patient engagement and feedback mechanism

The patient's sense of participation during the treatment process directly affects the effectiveness of doctor-patient communication. In order to improve doctor-patient communication, hospitals should encourage patients to actively participate in diagnosis and treatment decisions, so that they can make informed consent based on understanding the condition and treatment plan. The improvement of patient participation not only helps establish a trusting relationship between doctors and patients, but also enhances treatment compliance. Therefore, doctors should provide sufficient information, patiently answer patients' questions, and encourage patients to express doubts and opinions when communicating with patients. The improvement of patient participation also includes active participation in self health management during the diagnosis and treatment process, such as encouraging self-monitoring and participating in rehabilitation plans during the treatment process. In addition, establishing a comprehensive patient feedback mechanism is also an important means to enhance doctor-patient communication.

5 Conclusion

The communication between doctors and patients in the medical service system has become an important factor affecting the quality of medical care and patient satisfaction. Through in-depth analysis of obstacles in doctor-patient communication, it can be seen that the root cause of poor communication lies in uneven medical resources, insufficient communication skills of medical personnel, and a lack of psychological and expectation management for patients. Therefore, improving doctor-patient communication not only requires improving the communication quality of medical personnel, but also through optimizing the medical environment, introducing advanced communication technology, establishing effective patient feedback mechanisms, and other efforts. Only by taking multiple measures can we truly promote the harmonious development of doctor-patient relationships, thereby improving the quality and efficiency of medical services. In the future, with the deepening of healthcare system reform, doctor-patient communication will increasingly become an important area for improving medical services, which deserves continuous attention and exploration.

About the Author

Xiran Feng is an undergraduate student whose research focus is clinical medicine.

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