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Recording Mock Patient Interviews: Helping Identify Strengths and Weaknesses in Patient Communication

Krista Brooks

Southwestern Oklahoma State University, krista.brooks@swosu.edu

Cheri Walker

Southwestern Oklahoma State University, cheri.walker@swosu.edu

Kristin Montarella

Southwestern Oklahoma State University, kristin.montarella@swosu.edu

Tiffany Kessler

Southwestern Oklahoma State University, tiffany.kessler@swosu.edu

Erin Callen

Southwestern Oklahoma State University, erin.callen@swosu.edu

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Rationale

- Good communication is an important aspect of providing patient-centered care.
- Effective communication requires several skills including:
 - ability to articulate important information
 - good listening skills
 - effective use and interpretation of nonverbal communication
 - effective interviewing techniques to collect information

Objectives

Primary objective

- Compare how students perceive their communication skills prior to watching their recorded interview versus their self-reflection after viewing their recorded interview

Secondary objective

- Collect student statements that reflect the areas in which they felt needed improvement and areas in which they felt more confident

Study Population

- Students in the 3rd semester of pharmacy school
- All students participated with 29 of the 36 students consenting to using their data for the study

Author Disclosure

Authors of this presentation have nothing to disclose concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation.

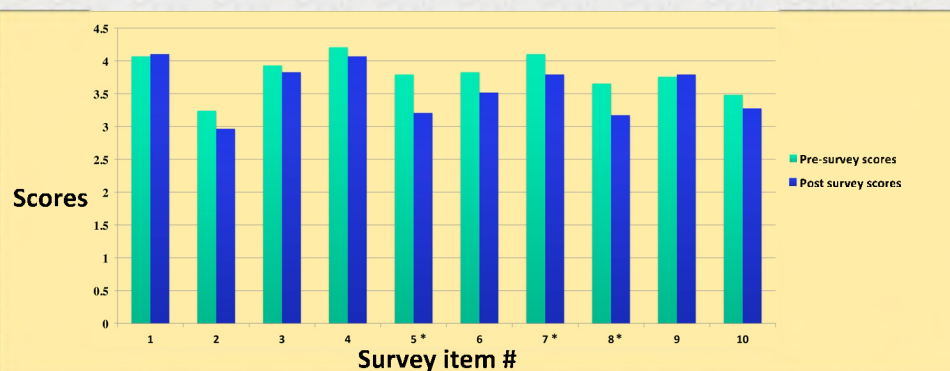
Methods

- Prior to the activity, communication skills were discussed in class.
- Each student used their own video recording device to record their interview with another student playing the part of a patient.
- After the interview, baseline data was collected for each individual student as a self-assessment survey composed of 10 items that allowed the student to rate their performance using a Likert scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).
- The students also had the opportunity to write positive comments about their performance as well as describe areas where they felt improvement was needed.
- Each student then viewed their recorded interview and filled out the same survey again.

Survey Items and Data

Survey Items:

1. Greeted the patient properly and established good rapport
2. Established an agenda for the interview
3. Maintained good eye contact with the patient
4. Appeared calm and unhurried to the patient
5. Identified and responded to the patient's emotional or non-verbal cues
6. Used guided-questioning techniques (i.e. moving from open-ended to more focused questions)
7. Used active listening skills (closely attending to what the patient is communicating)
8. Used transitions when changing directions during the interview
9. Made clarifications as to what the patient means when necessary
10. Encouraged with continuers, used posture, gestures, or words to encourage the patient



Results

- Of the 10 items on the survey, two of the questions showed a mean increase in scores after viewing the recorded interview (**Items #1 and #9**)
- Eight items showed a mean decrease in scores after viewing
- Statistically significant changes ($P < 0.05$) between mean pre- and post-assessment:
 - **Item #5** - (3.8 ± 0.9 versus 3.2 ± 0.8)
 - **Item #7** - (4.1 ± 0.8 versus 3.8 ± 0.8)
 - **Item #8** - (3.7 ± 0.8 versus 3.2 ± 0.8)

Implications

- The major benefit of providing students with the opportunity to view their interview skills is to allow the students to truly self-reflect on what is actually occurring during the interview rather than base their evaluations on how they perceive themselves.
- Non-verbal communication is an important aspect of interacting with patients. It can be difficult to assess positive and negative attributes of interviewing techniques when solely focusing on a patient's reaction.
- When students have the opportunity to review the interaction, they can focus on their tone of voice and non-verbal communication.
- This activity allowed the student to truly reflect on areas where they excel and also make them aware of areas that may need improvement.

