

Student Name

Professor Bose

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Professional-Patient Relationship

When you go to see a physician, you expect to be treated kindly, and feel like they care about you personally. Your physician or nurse could easily cross a line doing so though. They walk a fine line between the caring people you want treating you, and the stone cold strictly professional people you wouldn't want treating you. If you were told you had a life threatening disease, you would feel so alone and the only thing that could help the situation even a little bit was to feel compassion from the person telling you. Those in the medical field must master the professional-patient relationship to avoid malpractice suits, since helping the patient is the ultimate goal.

The entire basis for the health care provider and the client relationship is the bond of trust. The reason someone goes to a specific doctor's office or hospital is because they trust those working there. This trust must go both ways also. The medical professional trusts the patient to include all details and grievances pertaining to their health honestly. However, the same goes for the doctor/nurse, the patient expects them to keep everything completely private, and to put the patient's best interests before their own. The vulnerable patient must feel safe in the fact that their care taker will not take advantage of them or the whole bond of trust is gone. Confidentiality is a very important ethical guideline to follow, as it comforts the patient and shows there is an appropriate level of professionalism. Every major health care provider has

their own formal set of ethical guidelines to abide by, but for the most part they are all very similar. Whether someone is a surgeon, a nurse, or even a hospital employee, you are expected to abide by ethical guidelines to keep the patient comfortable, and safe.

One of the main things expected of a medical professional is their honesty. The honesty to not hold back important information, or lie about the seriousness of the diagnosis is what you expect when you walk into a doctor's office. Also the doctor/nurse must use all the knowledge and skills they possess to help in any way to balance good results, and the possibility of harm. Another issue sworn to as a health care provider is to not turn any one person away for treatment based on personal characteristics from race to religion. Also, avoiding conflicts of interest, as the doctor or nurse cannot benefit personally in any way. These moral standards are important to uphold as a professional, and hopefully all of those in the medical field pledge no harm and to only work for the client/patient to benefit in every way possible.

Over the past 30 years legal obligations and liabilities have become very perplexing, and less black and white. "Prior to the second half of the twentieth century, the patient-physician relationship was strictly hierarchical."(Browning 2) Until then, the doctor was in essence God, and the sick were to be strict with the doctor's treatment of the diagnosis. It wasn't until World War II until the patients became more questionable and interested in their health care. The patients that had their own specialized training involved in their jobs weren't as clueless and in turn "less impressed by the physician's educational credentials and more likely to question his or her advice." (Browning 2) The patient in the recent decades has been quicker to question and to trust their instincts more than their doctors, which hopefully with professionalism could ensure a more trusting relationship.

There have been many issues that have reshaped the patient-professional relationship. The obvious changes would be the rise in educational level. Another change has been the differences in moral beliefs and being more open and expressive of them publically. The patient might not believe in abortion, euthanasia, organ donation, limitations on medical research, and they might strongly believe in all. These moral issues might have a huge importance to whether or not a patient wants to be treated by their same doctor, and if they respect and trust the doctor. Over the past three decades, the education and training of physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, and other health care professionals has become harder, lengthier, and more complicated all together. Our criteria and body of information needed to learn has grown significantly in our generation than in the past. "Another factor is the increased tendency toward professional specialization, which makes it more difficult for health care providers to see patients as whole human beings." (Browning 2) Not only are the physicians and nurses seeing the patients differently, but the patient's are seeing the physicians and nurses differently. A lot of patients think that the health care system is just concerned with pleasing the insurance companies, rather than providing them quality care, which of course can change the relationship. The changes in technology and communication makes people think their information isn't as confidential as they once thought it was also. The most wide-spread issues in any line of work though, are multiculturalism and how to treat everyone equally and respect individual's wishes at the same time. These issues are going to be something we as medical professionals will always have to deal with, and there are probably more to come in the following years.

There is a variety of situations where the health and safety of the patient relies on the nurses ability to speak and write professionally and knowledgably. "Increasingly, nurses are

called upon to not only care for the physical needs of patients, but also to further and create legal, medical, and academic knowledge in the form of workplace documents such as charts, lab reports, and nursing research.” (Dick 1) When you think of a nurse on the job, you think the major skill used daily would be memorization, and not much writing. Many important and main stream nursing journals stress how important writing in the field is though. Writing skills possessed by the nurse and all her co-workers dramatically increases the rate and precision needed in communication, teaching, and staying current in the field. The more common verbal exchange between two nurses makes one think there is less value in the written word, however, written communication and “development of writing skills play in the nursing profession (Dautermann 50). All day long a nurse writes in single symbols, phrases, and words making it imperative they know how to makes sense of it all, organize, and communicate what they meant at the end of the day through the mess of data collected. There are all sorts of different types of diseases and research coming out daily in nursing journals that nurses need to stay up to date with, making writing and communication key.

English 101 is an obvious credential for anyone needing to learn how to form sentences; critical thinking, how to organize data collected, and all of these skills are needed in nursing. This class opens the student up to all of the journals, and articles in the library that they otherwise wouldn't know all too well. Lynda W. Slimmer, Ph.D. and RN, in her research affirms, “writing is used not only to improve students' communication skills but to promote learning and to provoke critical thinking”. (Slimmer 75)

Those in the medical field must master the professional-patient relationship to avoid malpractice suits, since helping the patient is the ultimate goal. The tools learned in

English 101 will be the foundation for avoiding malpractice suits, staying educated in the field, and to remember to always think critically. The patient comes first and the way to execute that would be to perform the perfect professional-patient relationship which requires the ability to be well-spoken in person and on paper. The tools and skills learned in English 101 will follow a nurse all the way through the day that they have his/her first professional-patient relationship.

Works Cited Page

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