

**You can improve your
communication skills**

Module 3

Learning objectives

- Explain what communication is and why it is important
- Demonstrate active listening
- Describe some non verbal and verbal communication skills
- Demonstrate good communication skills

Communication skills

- Listening exercise

One study showed that doctors interrupt their patients after an average of 18 seconds

Communication

- What do we mean by communication?

- giving and receiving messages
- aim to reach understanding
- important to PC
- skills can be learned

‘a process of understanding and anticipating the actions and reactions of another individual’ Neumann

Communication

- Why is it important?

Communication

- Good communication
 - creates relationships
 - gives value to the other person
 - reduces isolation
 - gathers and gives information
 - enables expression of feelings
 - reduces uncertainty
 - maintains hope



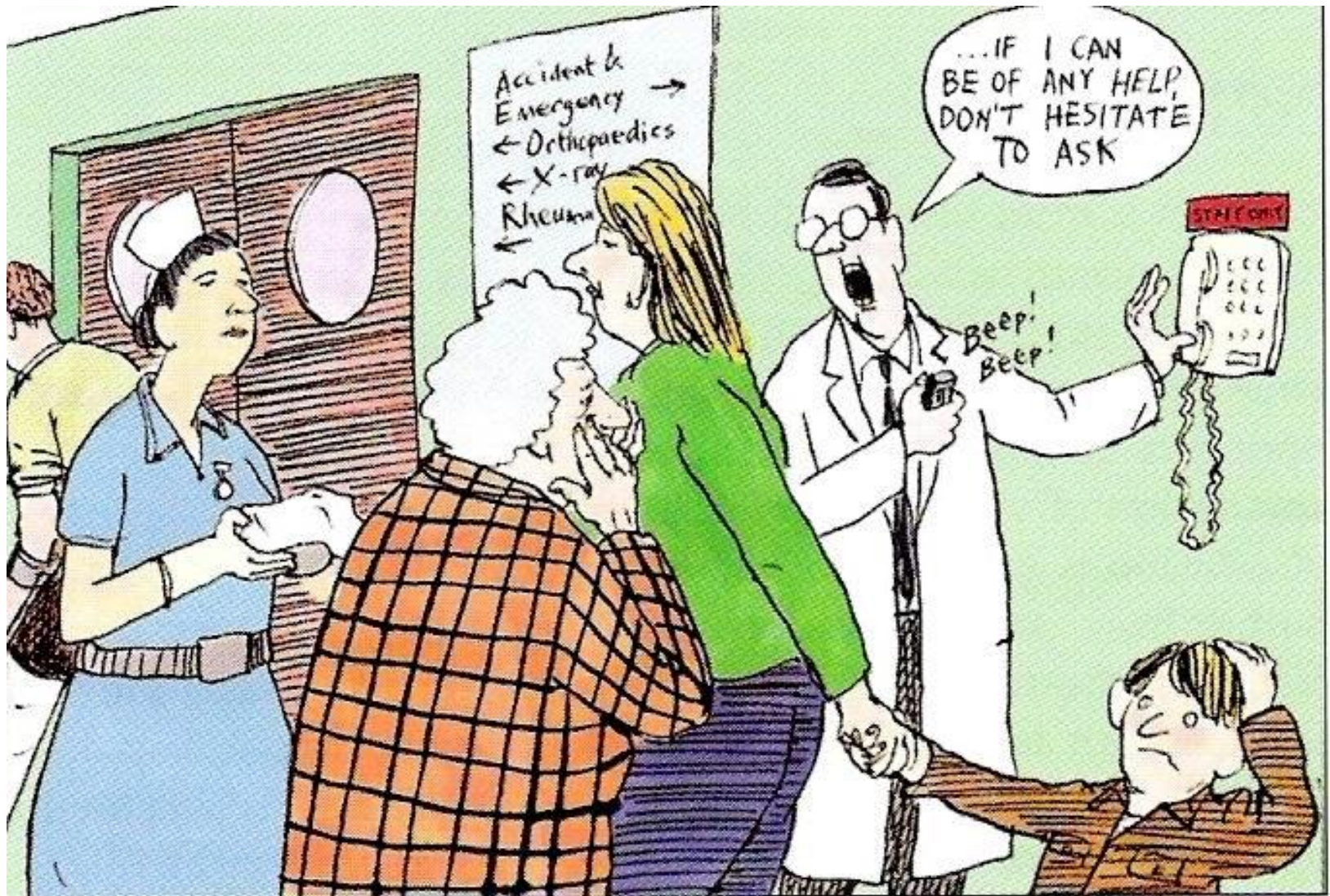
Listening skills

- Find a quiet place if possible
- Sit at the patient's level
- Pay attention, keep eye contact
- Active listening
- Allow silence, do not interrupt
- Clarify and summarise

Listening skills

■ Non-verbal

- keep eye contact, pay attention
- sit near the patient at their level
- relaxed posture, sit forwards and keep still
- allow silence, don't interrupt
- encouraging responses
- facial expression
- appropriate touch



Typical scene

Listening skills

■ Verbal

- asking questions/ eliciting emotions
- empathising responses
- clarifying
- reframing
- allowing silences
- summarising
- planning for the next step

Good communication

- patient telling more about symptoms and concerns
- physicians collect better information and makes more accurate diagnosis
- clinicians better understands and responds to patient's individual needs hence better therapeutic action
- enhanced communication
- improved patient outcome

Communication

- Practicing skills
 - role play

Case Scenario

- A woman of 40 has breast cancer which has spread to her bones.
 - her pain is being treated by medicines from the hospital
 - she comes to you very worried
 - she has three children . Her husband is not very supportive

Summing up

- What was difficult?
- What was surprising?
- What have you learnt?
- What you need to practice?
- How can you put it into practice?

Final reminder

- ‘Most components of communication techniques can be taught and these learned skills have an impact on the physician's ability to communicate better’

Buckman R, Communication skills in palliative care: a practical guide, Neurol Clin. 2001 Nov;19(4):989-1004.

- These resources are developed as part of the THET multi-country project whose goal is to strengthen and integrate palliative care into national health systems through a public health primary care approach
 - Acknowledgement given to Cairdeas International Palliative Care Trust and MPCU for their preparation and adaptation
 - part of the teaching materials for the Palliative Care Toolkit training with modules as per the Training Manual
 - can be used as basic PC presentations when facilitators are encouraged to adapt and make contextual



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Global Health Academy

