Patient perceptions of radiographer communication skills in general radiology

Aims and objectives

The improvement of results in healthcare through the transmission of information to the patient within a relation of empathy and trust is already a verified hypothesis.

The purpose of this study was to explore of patient perceptions regarding the performance of the Radiographer in terms of interpersonal communication skills and to verify that the professional practice is carried out in accordance with a policy of respect for the Radiographers code of ethics and the charter of patients' rights and duties.

Methods and materials

To performe this assesment following instruments were used:

- "Communication Assessment Tool" (Makoul et al. 2007) adapted to the professional reality of the radiographers;
- 14 questions with a five-point Likert scale;
- Paper-based instrument delivered and filled by the patients after the performance of general radiology procedures in two public hospitals;

Descriptive and correlational statistic were performed.

Results

225 valid questionnaires from 2 public hospitals were obtained.

Patients aged between 24 to 85 y and diferent scholar levels and other sociodemographic data were collected (Table 1 on page 5.

Results of the pilot study indicate that the adapted instrument is internally consistent, with a high reliability scale Cronbach's alpha = 0.98.

Considering radiographers communication skills, highest rating were obtained in following items (Table 2 on page 5):

- Respect for the patients;
- Greet the patients;
- Time available to patient-centered care;

Lowest ratings were obtained in next items (Table 2 on page 5):

- Involved patients in decision making process;
- Encouraged to make questions;
- Talk with patients about the next following steps;

The Pearson correlation was selected to evaluated relationships between dependent variables and shown to be positive and statistically significant at 0,01 level for all items (Table 3 on page 6).

No statistically significant differences regarding the patient perception of the Radiographer Interpersonal Skills were found between hospitals.

Images for this section:

Characteristics		Nº patients (n=255) / n (%)
Gender	Female	162 (63,5)
	Male	93 (36,5)
Age	Under 24	45 (17,6)
	25-44	88 (34,5)
	45-64	81 (31,8)
	65-84	36 (14,1)
	Above 85	5 (2,0)
Scholar level	1st level	44 (17,3)
	2nd level	33 (12,9)
	3th level	61 (23,9)
	High school	68 (26,7)
	Professional school	12 (4,7)
	BSc	25 (9,8)
	MSc	8 (3,1)
	PhD	1 (0,4)
Procedure	Outpatient	170 (66,7)
	A&E	78 (30,6)
	Inpatient	7 (2,7)
Reason	Rotine	139 (54,5)
	Known disease	116 (45,5)
Hospital	A	135 (52,9)
	B	120 (47,1)

Table 1: Sociodemographic data

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Item	"Excelent"		
	N	%	
1. Greeted me in a way that made me feel confortable	73	28,6	3,88
2. Treated me with respect	90	35,3	4,04
3. Showed interest in my ideas about my health	63	24,7	3,59
4. Understood my main health concerns	62	24,3	3,64
5. Paid attention to me (looked at me, listened carefully)	63	24,7	3,69
6. Let me talk without interruptions	66	25,9	3,71
7. Gave me as much information as I needed	65	25,5	3,65
8. Talked in terms I could understand	67	26,3	3,78
9. Checked to be sure I understood everything	60	23,5	3,74
10. Encouraged me to ask questions	55	21,6	3,36
11. Involved me in decisions as much as I needed	52	20,4	3,34
12. Discussed next steps with me	58	22,7	3,49
13. Showed care and concern	64	25,1	3,74
14. Spent the right amount of time with me	75	29,4	3,80

Table 2: Main results for 14 questions of questionaire

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Itens	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14
Q1	1,00	0,84	0,75	0,71	0,73	0,69	0,71	0,75	0,72	0,66	0,66	0,64	0,74	0,71
Q2		1,00	0,76	0,72	0,73	0,72	0,72	0,74	0,70	0,63	0,66	0,62	0,72	0,69
Q3			1,00	0,89	0,80	0,80	0,78	0,72	0,75	0,79	0,79	0,76	0,73	0,73
Q4				1,00	0,80	0,78	0,79	0,73	0,72	0,79	0,79	0,74	0,71	0,71
Q5					1,00	0,77	0,80	0,76	0,77	0,71	0,73	0,72	0,75	0,73
Q6						1,00	0,82	0,76	0,76	0,74	0,76	0,69	0,68	0,68
Q7							1,00	0,78	0,78	0,79	0,77	0,75	0,74	0,74
Q8								1,00	0,80	0,70	0,72	0,67	0,76	0,76
Q9									1,00	0,78	0,77	0,73	0,77	0,74
Q10										1,00	0,88	0,85	0,73	0,76
Q11											1,00	0,88	0,75	0,75
Q12												1,00	0,76	0,75
Q13													1,00	0,83
Q14														1,00

Table 3: Pearson correlation.

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Conclusion

Radiographers communication skills were evaluated with good levels of patient confidence with the radiological examinations.
Despite the overall positive results, this area of health service delivery must be accorded the attention it deserves to continually improve on patient satisfaction through improved communication.

Communication with the patient takes an important part in providing quality health care. As such, interpersonal and communication skills are considered a core area of radiographer competence.
An efficient interaction, with the goal of providing an Humanized care in radiology has many benefits such as:

- Effective patient clarification
- Increasing psychological well-being
- Increasing predisposition to return for next examinations
- Increasing satisfaction

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Images for this section:

Fig. 1

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