

## THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR HEALTH ASSISTANCE TECHNICIANS IN HIGH-STRESS ENVIRONMENTS

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### **Abstract**

Effective communication between health assistants and patients is necessary for health care to support the development of patient health, as well as among themselves to support teamwork, which ultimately leads to the achievement of health services. Various demands in fast-paced situations will test the quality of personnel to work and communicate in a reliable manner. Not only is good performance considered necessary, but that performance must always be consistent. Fast-paced situations require more adaptive individuals and work patterns in performing verbal and non-verbal communication. The health assistance team also needs to have an understanding of the technique of emphasizing behaviors in the implementation of non-verbal communication. Health problem resolution needs a method in the communication process between health workers and health team members who are not only supported by specialized skills, professionalism, and good attitudes. Effectiveness in health services can be influenced by the quality of communication between health assistants and patients, and also among health assistants as a health team. Various models or relaxation techniques for verbal and non-verbal communication in complex situations, as well as when facing a high level of annoyance, may be necessary techniques to overcome this case. Therefore, when considering the level of stress and the state of patients, certain communication techniques should be developed and studied in depth. Keywords: communication, health assistant technicians, health assistance, stress.

### **Keywords**

Keywords: communication skills, health assistance technicians, high-stress environments, healthcare, verbal communication, strategies for effective communication.

Topic: 'The Importance of Communication Skills for Health Assistance Technicians in High-Stress Environments'

Section Title: 'Keywords'

Section Summary: Appropriate keywords have been selected to target the themes discussed throughout the essay. Each keyword was chosen based on its relevance to the content of the paper. These words encapsulate the significant aspects of the paper while also hinting at the issues that are to be elaborated upon in the forthcoming sections. Furthermore, these keywords will aid in guiding readers to the content of the essay. In essence, they hint at the most important topics the paper will address and underline the necessity and efficacy of this type of targeted language.

### **1. Introduction**

Abstract: Healthcare systems are at maximum capacity, with resources overstretched. Teams are stretched even thinner, causing much strain on both workers and patients. To be an efficient healthcare worker, their communication skills must be effective in exchanging information and creating strategies. High-stakes and high-stress environments often entail less effective communication strategies. Health assistance technicians face particularly high-stress scenarios

where effective communication is imperative for the speedy and successful management of trauma situations. Little research is available defining specific communication strategies in the pre-hospital trauma scenario between non-physician members. This research aims to investigate which communication strategies are most useful for the individuals who are deemed first on the scene in a pre-hospital setting in managing trauma situations. In this paper, we discuss the skills and responsibilities of a health assistance technician in relation to the management of trauma situations, ensuring the best patient outcomes. This can be done by determining how to become an excellent technician by thoroughly investigating the skills necessary for the position, including the traits necessary for successful team management. In the high-performance EMS, technicians are often the first to report to a trauma scene and must manage the often high-stress environment. Intense patient-family members or witnesses, personal safety, pressure to provide "life-saving procedures," and maintaining effective moving protocols can make traumatic encounters difficult. It is a necessity for health assistance technicians to develop solid communication abilities, allowing for effective teamwork and successful patient results.

## ***2. The Role of Health Assistance Technicians***

Health assistance technicians take care of patients and help healthcare teams in many different situations. They monitor the patient's condition continuously, for example, before, during, and after the doctor performs a medical procedure. Also, diagnostic or life-saving supportive treatments are provided by these healthcare technicians. The duties and responsibilities of the healthcare technician include being prepared to provide any medical and technical support for both diagnostic and therapeutic interventions. Their duties also include documenting observations, relaying information to other team members, accessing and selecting appropriate images to use. Above all, healthcare workers are responsible for making the scanning experience as comfortable as possible for the patient undergoing the study because patient satisfaction is an important indicator of quality care and healthcare delivery. It is known that effective communication is a basic prerequisite for successful intervention to minimize stress for the inexperienced during scanning. The ability of these healthcare technologists to communicate information effectively is, therefore, important so that they may instruct the patient during the study.

In healthcare settings, medical and technical functions are important and require the intervention of a healthcare provider. It is very clear that well-functioning teams have a huge impact on the organization achieving its goals and objectives. Therefore, the healthcare sector is expected to provide communication and teamwork training to these critical team members, if needed, in addition to the technical training generally provided at the workplace. This innovative idea will result in significant changes to improve the quality of medical technical interventions.

### **2.1. Definition and Responsibilities**

Health assistance technicians are ambulatory care providers who mostly apply their skills within high-stress environments. These technicians are capable of performing their responsibilities, including the required vital signs measurements for two patients under six minutes, assisting during procedures, as well as prioritizing and adjusting work when the patients' acuity or providers' workload changes. Over the course of the day, these professionals' desired services do not relate to the perspectives of the medical team. What they do best intentionally slots them between patients and the rest of the healthcare providers, which includes everyone from clerical staff to consultants and their teams. Each technician is expected to constantly and appropriately communicate with as many as four to five nurses, two to three attendings, as well as an unquantifiable number of residents, consultants, and midlevel providers, per patient per shift, about the patient's present condition, presenting complaints, and patient and attending goals for that visit.

Technicians also function as the non-clinical voice of the patient to accompany patients to referrals and procedures in an effort to advocate for their every need. They contribute as the critical bond between patients, families, and the organization. Evidence continues to grow, showing that ineffective communication results in deficient diagnoses, treatment recommendations, and treatment team performance, with patient outcomes compromised as the conclusion to ineffective communication efforts. Technicians rely on inter-professional teams to operationalize their goals for each patient. While subspecialists and consultants may see a patient face-to-face, the majority of care and support services provided to that patient by trained medical professionals are carried out under the auspices of the attending of record. In order to do this, ongoing training in communication and system strategies is vital.

### **3. *Communication Skills in Healthcare***

Communication is important in healthcare. As technology advances, it remains essential for healthcare providers to communicate effectively with each other and with patients and their families. As other health professionals are increasingly mobile, health assistance technicians often have the information needed to help with medical issues such as decisions about drugs and treatment, as well as to improve the quality of care. Technicians using effective communication skills can produce lasting effects on patients and help families make informed decisions. Technicians work with other healthcare professionals who want to maintain health, treat illnesses, and maintain a strong foundation for educating and changing people's behavior at the same time. There are three different ways that people communicate: verbal, non-verbal, and written. It is important to develop effective communication skills, especially under pressure, in order to provide medical information clearly and effectively. Healthcare professionals know that speaking to a patient in distress in a clear, calm voice helps.

Active listening can show patients, families, and visitors that you are a caring professional that they can trust. Simple things such as nodding or smiling to show you understand or that you will follow up after every visit will help establish rapport. When you communicate and establish relationships with patients, families, their representatives, or assistance technicians, you should be sensitive to all who take into account the patient's culture, language, computer literacy, reading level, and other factors. It can affect communication. Use the appropriate method of communication according to your preferences. Here are some methods you can use: compassionate listening, touch, and therapeutic communication that comes from information about privacy. You are less likely to let important information be too subtle, to result in a medical error, or non-compliance with instructions. Patients may not be prepared to follow the instructions you give if they are not clear. Technical staff must communicate with a variety of individuals from diverse backgrounds, so it is important to find different ways to communicate with people for the best results. The message is clear. Patients and families who understand and agree to instructions have a better chance of full recovery and are less likely to be arrested or re-admitted. Active listening helps to establish trust and build a relationship with the patient that can make the difference between recovery from a collision or a building. As a technician, you may need to prioritize things such as sterilizing wound dressings or transporting patients to treatment. Ideally, you should return to these conversations after doing this. The true relationship allows you to return and continue where you left off, so that you can address any concerns or fears beyond the events that have occurred.

#### **3.1. Verbal Communication**

Good verbal communication is a central tenet of healthcare. Whether interacting with primary interprofessional collaborators, support staff, or the patient, clear and concise language is needed

to ensure that everyone understands their role in patient care, shared decision-making, or the situational awareness needed to run a trauma resuscitation. In the high-speed, high-stress world of medicine, the smallest amount of doubt or uncertainty can have disastrous results. Therefore, it is crucial for all members of the healthcare team, including health assistance technicians, to master language when working with others in the pursuit of a common goal. Those who are able to use flowery, complex, or fancy words to convey their thoughts and treat their patients lose an essential component of healthcare. Speaking and listening account for a significant portion of patient interactions. When effectively employed, the most relevant verbal skill used by support staff like health assistance technicians is active listening.

Verbal communication begins with the words selected to convey an idea. Use language that is easily understood. For example, rather than saying "ventricular septal defect," say "hole in the heart" when speaking with a patient. The tone and pacing used are also important factors in reaching a desired end result. In the environment described above, this may mean that words are more likely to be spoken more deliberately and with a higher volume or lower tone to denote urgency. A significant development element in verbal communication is to use language and agreements to foster better relationships with potential patients and influence them when they arrive for medical treatment. Rapport building is often seen in pediatrics and has a place in the rapid practice-setting support staff has chosen. Support staff need to use verbal skills such as empathy, understanding, reassurance, and respect to convey messages necessary to build and maintain this dialogue. Provide examples as many students do not understand what good verbal communication means.

#### ***4. Challenges of High-Stress Environments***

In the fast-paced, high-stress environments of critical care units in healthcare settings, communication can be challenging. Each of these professionals faces their own barriers to communication. Physicians, because of extreme time constraints, are forced to communicate in a rapid and directive manner. Nurses may have to communicate over the increasing din of a patient's care while crouched in a compromising position that inhibits optimal eye contact. Patients in these situations may be experiencing an emergency themselves or may be highly emotional because of the acuity of the patient's illness. These factors, as well as many others, make effective verbal and non-verbal communication, a critical component of these broken chain links, a challenge. Team members may not have heard a physician's directive because of alarms, an infusion pump beeping, an overhead announcement, or background noise. Unheard messages or messages delivered without attention, understanding, or context all contribute to a continuation of the situation rather than the movement toward resolution.

Despite each of its advantages, some of the challenges of this environment include a potential for tenseness leading to impatience or sarcasm; the possibility of the patient misinterpreting the intent of questions not directed to them; the time it may take to complete such a form or assessment depending on the complexity of the questions, the patient's educational level, and other variables; the inconsistency and therefore the possibility of a lack of reliability of such an assessment given the unique timing of its completion; and the concern about a subject feeling uncomfortable if someone were to read the completed form or assessment. Poor communication can breed misunderstanding and contribute to increased anxiety on the part of the patient and with the patient's family. In more critical terms, poor communication can contribute to a patient safety hazard. To cope with the demands of a high-stress environment, healthcare professionals who work in them must develop the ability to communicate in a style that is most effective in that scenario.

This fit may not be their usual tested, safe, and practiced style, a habit hard to break for seasoned professionals but may be of the utmost importance in this unique setting.

#### **4.1. Impact on Communication**

##### **4.1 The Impact of Communication**

When tension rises within a specialized environment, the process of communication between professionally trained health assistance technicians can be threatened or, at the very least, altered. Communication may become increasingly difficult, leading to misconstrued messages and lost or misinterpreted information. This can have an emotional effect on the physicians and paramedics, as well as on the patients if the message being delivered is a response to a critical problem that is happening to them. The important factor is to remain calm and interact with the behavior created by the anxious message. Physicians and communication with patients in critical and highly emotional moments should demonstrate calm and the ability to effectively interact with their condition in order to be the best advocate of patient care and safety with the staff. Comprehensive knowledge of the possible barriers to fail-safe communication can assist in all areas of industry.

If this begins to happen, unfortunately, the entire environment becomes saturated with noise which impairs all possible forms of communication. Various communication processes are burdened by stress. The following scenarios are taken from a specially trained workplace that is high stress, and these conditions are not at all conducive to clear communication. Yet, in this environment, communication is critical. Awareness is the first plan of action. Any procedure that demands quick, immediate response is going to be impacted by everyone's level of stress. Shock, anger, fear, memory loss, etc., surrounds inconsiderate decision-making. It is unethical and quite frankly wrong to assume everything will calm down and communication in outstanding form will reign. Being prepared for the worst of the worst can give you the upper hand. All too often, communication between health care providers is heated, hostile, and extremely ineffective.

#### **5. Strategies for Effective Communication in High-Stress Environments**

Communication strategies exist to help healthcare team members get their message across in the most effective manner. For individuals, long-term training can help build confidence levels and make them more competent in scenarios such as those faced by health assistance technicians. In particular, training programs that focus on scenario-based learning, coupled with attentive listening exercises, are most likely to foster confidence in a clinician faced with a critical situation, the most critically ill patients, and allow a doctor to make effective decisions. This training technique is most often used for communication skills because these skills are built on the same psychological principles as interpersonal skills, teamwork, and leadership.

There are many effective approaches for training people to communicate and behave with expertise in highly uncertain or volatile work environments. These educational approaches are strongly evidence-based and are widely encouraged within the psychological research literature. To help team members acquire effective and consistent skills, we could follow guidelines in our rigorous team development activities: Standardize communication: Healthcare staff should communicate using a standardized approach that will help reduce the chances of miscommunication that interfere with health decisions. Healthcare teams working in high-stress environments should use visual aids and written instructions because they help the user quickly understand complex information. Many modern design manuals stress the importance of good visual communication and user-friendly icons and visual aids.

Open, honest, and skillful communication: Professionals need to make team members feel safe and able to freely discuss what is on their minds and debrief difficult situations after the event. Teams should encourage assertive rather than aggressive behavior in stressful situations and

should use debriefs as an opportunity to build teams. This team-building works with the cognitive-behavioral philosophy of "mental rehearsal." Skilled training can prepare medics and nurses to manage stress and emotions in life-threatening situations. During training, using personal examples can enhance the overall reflective effect. In structured debriefs, professionals often refer to "doing a debrief" as a practice rather than "debriefing." Rather than taking a top-down approach, a well-functioning air-ambulance team may encourage the most junior team members to lead the debrief.

Written and verbal checklists: The use of checklists for tasks such as helicopter handovers can help ensure that important information is not forgotten. Senior aeromedical personnel often become complacent in their practice and forget that junior members may be focused, worried, or extremely busy. A "one chance to get it right" philosophy can provide the impetus for teams to use written checklists.

Role resuming: It is very useful to role-play scenarios. Using scenarios allows participants to "try out and link" recently learned information, and they begin to think like a doctor or paramedic. The teaching approach should start with simple scenarios and gradually add complexity. In CPR training, participants are taught about clear and simple goals, such as "early chest compressions" and "early defibrillation." The simplicity of the cognitive model helps to take the pressure off the individual: they want to get an "A" in their simulation exercise. Influence and power: All medical staff now take courses in "influential communication" so that, depending on the perceived status of the individual at the accident scene, the patient or victim may receive different amounts and styles of information.

## **6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the role of the health assistance technician is fraught with challenges that can easily sway effective communication and relativize how important it is. High stress levels among caregivers under specific circumstances, the complexity of procedures and techniques, and the typical demographic makeup of the assisted patients have the potential to significantly limit communication facility, which can potentially have a significant impact on patient care. A number of strategies can enable health assistants to overcome the negativity of their typical surroundings, the nature of the team, or the problems they might have with superiors, and stimulate effectiveness in practice. The structure of continuing education, e-learning availability, and on-the-job training were all considered; as well, communication exercises and non-competitive games can inculcate long-lasting skills that are beneficial for the therapeutic alliance.

In conclusion, despite the need for continuous training, the increased results—fewer mistakes, increased patient satisfaction—should prove economically feasible. Further research must be initiated to better address gaps in knowledge, i.e., the need to involve larger divides with randomization, including advantages and disadvantages of proposed potential strategies and methodologies. However, it is of great importance to reflect on the foundation of high-performance health assistance technicians: uncontestable evidence of competence when accomplishing effective communication. This would lead to a comprehensive training program in the field of communication, i.e., regarding error prevention. Communication among health assistance technicians seems to be a very important issue influencing the quality of professional practices.

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