

Talking about Chronic Pain: The Importance of Communication Skills Training for Practitioners

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Type selection

Preferred presentation type: Symposium

General data

Please select your category: Teaching/Assessment

Abstract data

Body: Chronic pain is multifactorial: it is produced and modulated by the central nervous system through a complex interaction of (neuro)biological, psychological, and social factors. Therefore, adequately assessing and treating chronic pain is challenging: it requires constructive communication that includes both the patient's and the healthcare professionals' perspective is essential. However, research shows that conversations between patients and their practitioners, especially about the psychosocial factors involved in chronic pain, can be challenging. This symposium centres around the importance of good patient-practitioner communication and addresses some educational materials recently developed to support practitioners in developing their communication skills.

After a brief introduction by the chair, **Speaker 1** will delve into the significance of proficient patient-centered communication within chronic pain management. In her **presentation** she will explore the potential benefits that effective communication can introduce to clinical practice, alongside the hurdles clinicians may encounter when navigating communication with chronic pain patients. Speaker 1 is a PhD level expert in chronic pain rehabilitation and patient communication. She has published widely in the field of chronic pain and pain education. Additionally she teaches to Bachelor Students of Physiotherapy at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, focusing on the vital skill of effective patient communication.

Speaker 2 will give an **interactive lecture** about a workshop for practitioners' based on empirical analyses of audio-recorded conversations in pain rehabilitation practice. The workshop aims to increase practitioners' awareness of specific patterns in their interactions with patients and to stimulate them to reflect on their communication practices. The workshop's theoretical foundations and the practicalities of its design will be addressed. Also, the audience will be invited to discuss conversational material using exercises from the workshop. As an external PhD candidate at the department of Rehabilitation Medicine at Maastricht University, speaker 2 is interested in the interactional dilemmas patients and healthcare professionals face when exploring psychosocial factors involved in the patient's health situation. She examines patient-practitioner interaction taking a discursive psychology perspective.

Speaker 3 will give an **interactive lecture** on a video-based e-learning environment for physiotherapists based on a combination of findings from conversation analysis and theoretical knowledge of communication on chronic pain. The learning environment aims to improve healthcare professionals' communication skills, with a focus on three educational objectives 1) validating pain experiences, 2) eliciting patients' perspectives, and 3) exploring the biopsychosocial model of pain. Using exercises from the learning environment, speaker 3 will invite the audience to consider various conversational scenarios. Speaker 3 is a researcher at HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht and is interested in how healthcare practitioners interact with their patients in diverse contexts. With a background in education and linguistics, she hopes to translate communication research into practical guidelines or e-learning materials that healthcare professionals can use in their daily practice.

After the lectures there will be room **discussion between the speakers**. The discussion will be facilitated by the chair and based on questions from the audience.

Following this discussion, Speaker 1 will facilitate **participation from the audience**, using an exercise on the benefits and challenges of patient communication in chronic pain management using different statements and polls. During this exercise, the audience will actively be encouraged to participate in the debate related to these statements and to provide their own insights to the matter.

The chair will close the session with some concluding thoughts.

Intro (Chair)	5 mins
Speaker 1 - presentation	10 mins
Speaker 2 - interactive lecture	25 mins
Speaker 3 - interactive lecture	20 mins
Discussion between speakers (facilitated by chair)	10 mins
Participation from audience (speaker 1)	15 mins
Concluding thoughts (Chair)	5 mins

Chair 1

Title: Dr

First name: Petra

Last name: Sneijder

E-mail address: petra.sneijder@hu.nl

Organisation: HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht

Country: Netherlands

Chair 2

Would you like to add a 2nd chairman?: No

Chair 3

Would you like to add a 3rd chairman?: No

Chair 4

Would you like to add a 4th chairman?: No

Chair 5

Would you like to add a 5th chairman?: No

General

I agree that if my submission is accepted, my submission will be available for conference delegates to view on the event app and in the conference programme.: Yes

I agree that if my submission is accepted, my submission can be published in a special conference edition of Patient Education and Counseling.: Yes
