

# **Healthworker/Patient Relationship: the impact on the patient's health**

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# Healthworker/Patient Relationship

- It is the interaction between the HCW and the patient.
- HCW/Patient relationship is very critical in the care, treatment or management of the patient.
- Good HCW/patient relationship can impact on communication between the two and vice versa

# What is the Public perception of the HCW?

To the public, the HCW is known to be:

- Insolent
- Abusive
- Arrogant
- Untouchable
- Too known etc.

How do you react to these public perceptions?

# Effects of good HCW/Patient Relationship

- Patients feel welcome
- Reduced stress
- There is trust and confidence in the HCW
- Communication is improved
- Fears and other barriers are broken
- Information is freely given leading to
- Better understanding of patient's condition
- Early diagnosis and treatment +cure

# Effects of poor HCW/Patient Relationship

- Patient feels unwelcome
- Feels tensed and stressed because of fear
- Does not open up and therefore
- Communication is affected leading to
- Keeping vital information away from HCW
- Lack of trust and confidence
- Delayed diagnosis and treatment

# How do we improve HCW/Patient Relationship?

- Respect each patient as individual and accord the due respect and recognition
- Make them feel welcomed irrespective of their condition
- Start your initial interaction with a rapport to ease the patient's stress and tension
- This should extend to patient relatives

# How do we improve HCW/Patient Relationship?

- Always be prepared to listen to the patient and relatives and accordingly advice or suggest
- Do not be judgemental
- Always put yourself in the shoes of the patient
- Be gentle when trying to advise or put a point across to patient and relatives

# Consider these statements

- Maame, look! If you don't hold your child well and the needle comes out, I am not going to struggle this night to get any vein. You will have to drink the blood.
- But why did you decide to stay at home for all this time before coming

# Consider these statements

- Ooh Maame, I have told you to wait because I am busy! Why do you follow me like that? Go and sit down!
- Hello Sister, today we are very busy as you can see. I will not be able to see you now. It will take about an hour before I can see you so please get a place to relax and I will see you as soon as I am ready. Thank you.

# How do we improve HCW/Patient Relationship?

- Remember your communication skills- verbal and non-verbal
  - » Cultural barriers
  - » Gestures
  - » Tone
  - » Choice of words
- Remember that the patient already has a bad perception about you and you will prove him/her wrong

# How do we improve HCW/Patient Relationship?

- Remember that, if by your irresponsible action a patient's condition deteriorates and dies you are accountable legally and before your conscience
- Remember “do unto others as you wish others do unto you”

**REMEMBER YOU ARE ACCOUNTABLE  
FOR YOUR OWN ACTIONS!**