



Doing your LEVEL best to communicate effectively

Researchers at Kaiser Permanente have identified five key communication behaviors to foster smooth integration of computers into your practice:

- Let the patient look on
- Eye contact with the patient
- Value the computer as a tool
- Explain what you are doing
- Log off and say you are doing so

The following chart provides a practical application for the five communication behaviors and details some recommended actions to use and scripts to say to effectively integrate the computer into your exam room interaction with your patient. By including a few new communication behaviors into everyday practice, a computer in the exam room will enhance the overall care experience for the patient.

| Skills | Actions | What to Say |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Let the patient look on | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Move the screen for the patient to see❑ Invite the patient to move closer to the screen to view information❑ Ask the patient to verify information as you type <p>(This builds trust, actively involves the patient and demonstrates “we know you”)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ “Let’s look at the lab results to see how your cholesterol is doing.”❑ “Let me show you this part of the medical record so we can confirm some information together.”❑ “Here are the injections we have in our records. Have you had other injections outside this office that we need to add?” |
| Eye contact with the patient | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Greet the patient. Make a personal connection away from the computer.❑ Keep that connection throughout the visit by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Maintaining eye contact with the patient○ Turning toward the patient | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ “Good morning, Mr. Jones. I see you hurt your ankle.”❑ “Let’s spend a few minutes discussing your options.” |

| Skills | Actions | What to Say |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>when the patient speaks or when having a conversation</p> <p>(Maintaining eye contact promotes active involvement)</p> | |
| <p>Value the computer as a tool</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge the computer. <input type="checkbox"/> Let the patient know how the computer improves care. <input type="checkbox"/> Stay positive when faced with computer challenges. <p>(From the patient’s perspective, great medical technology is equated with great medical care)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> “The computer makes getting and sharing information with other health care team members so easy and efficient.” <input type="checkbox"/> “This computer is great. I have all your background information at my fingertips – medications, prior visit notes and lab results.” |
| <p>Explain what you are doing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Keep the patient informed about your thought processes and actions <input type="checkbox"/> As you are documenting, let the patient know what you are doing – entering information you have just discussed, ordering lab tests/medicines, accessing patient information. <p>(Patients who receive no explanation about what you are doing may think you are working on unrelated business.)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> “I am printing some instructions, which we can go over together in a moment.” <input type="checkbox"/> “ I am recording the details of your sore throat so our records will be complete.” <input type="checkbox"/> “I’ll order the medication we just discussed so it will be available at the pharmacy.” <input type="checkbox"/> “I’ll add the leg swelling to your problem list, so we can keep it in mind for future visits.” |
| <p>Log off and say you are doing so</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Tell the patient that you are logging off the computer to safeguard his/her information. <p>(Some patients are concerned about privacy and confidentiality. If their concerns are not addressed, satisfaction may decrease.)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> “I am logging off the computer now to keep your information private.” |

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