

# TEACHING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN THE EM CLERKSHIP

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## Objectives:

- Identify the benefits of strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Understand the current methods by which medical schools are assessing these skills
- Barriers to teaching communication
- Discuss the framework and implications of a novel, multi-modal patient-centric approach for teaching and assessing these skills

## Why is communication so important?

### *Benefits to the Patient*

- Higher satisfaction with their provider
- Better expectation of care
- More likely to demonstrate positive health behaviors

### *Benefits to the Physician*

- More positive patient interactions
- Increased empathy leading to increased career satisfaction and wellness
- Less likely to be sued

## Barriers to fostering effective communication skills:

- Empathy and communication skills decline as training progress
- Learners are under external pressures that are more highly emphasize
  - Outcomes-based metrics
  - Standardized test scores
  - Focus on faculty perceptions rather than patient perceptions
- Lack of dedicated focus in medical school curriculum after preclinical years

## Methods for teaching communication

- Role Modeling
- Explicit Teaching
  - Novel Solution
  - Longitudinal throughout medical school

## References:

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3. Neumann M, Edelhauser F, Tauschel D, et al. Empathy Decline and its reasons: A systematic review of studies with medical students and residents. *Acad Med*. 2011;86(8):996-1009.

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