TIME AND TALK:
STRUCTURING PATIENT-CENTERED COMMUNICATION

WORKSHOP
FACILITATOR
GUIDE

This Facilitator Guide gives you detailed instructions for how to run a Time and Talk workshop. In the “Getting Started” section of the online tool, you will find videos showing you how to conduct each session. The Resource Library contains resources and materials to help you facilitate the sessions and a host of ideas for exercises you can use to vary the content of your workshops.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

INTRODUCTIONS

FANTASY LIVES

Explain to participants that instead of going round in a circle introducing themselves, they are going to be asked to introduce someone else to the group. You might mention that often when introductions happen by going round in a circle, people do not listen attentively to what the others have to say.

Participants work in pairs to find out their partners’ name and one or two facts about them. They should also ask them what their ideal life would be if they were not doing what they are doing now. Repeat this list to check they understand all the tasks. Then, ask participants to take turns introducing their partners and their "fantasy lives" to the rest of the group. This takes some time but has a useful purpose.

Help participants to identify and understand the communication skills used in this exercise, such as listening, disclosing, interpreting, reproducing and feeding back information.

PURPOSE

To create an ice-breaker and introduce members of the group to each other.

TIME

20 minutes

PLAN FOR THE DAY

AIMS AND AGENDA

In the plenary session, discuss the participants' aims and agendas for the day in terms of communication skills. Refine each person's aims for what they would like to get out of the day. This helps the group understand what you can and cannot offer and gives them and you a chance to negotiate an agreed agenda. Note down all aims on a flipchart. The group will revert to the list at the end of the workshop.

You may also integrate this exercise in the Fantasy Lives exercise above.

PURPOSE

To ensure that participants clearly understand the aims and agenda of the workshop and that any special wishes are included, as far as possible

TIME

10 minutes

WAYS OF GETTING INFORMATION

Explain that the next exercise is about different ways to gather information.

FIRST ROUND: HAIR CUT

Ask participants to choose a partner, preferably someone they haven't worked with before. One participant asks the other: "Can you tell me about how you get your hair cut?" The participant asking the question should not say or ask anything else, just listen to the other participant provide an answer. They can nod and smile, but not say anything. Allow this exercise to go on for about three minutes.

Then in plenary, ask participants to reflect on what information was gathered from the exchange and list the replies. You may ask questions such as:

- What did you find out about the other person?
- In terms of your partner's values as well as details such as location, cost and motive for his/her hair dressing, can you list what you discovered?
- Ask the storytellers what it felt like to tell their story.
- Ask them, "What was the listener actually doing while you were speaking?"

SECOND ROUND: WASHING POWDER/DETERGENT

The pairs swap over. This time the interviewers, quietly to themselves, make a list of things they want to know about the washing powder/detergent their partners use for washing their clothes. Then, they should ask as many questions about the topic as possible from their formulated list to find out as much as they can from their partners. Tell them to make sure that they ask all the questions on their list.

Ask each person to reflect on their own experience. Ask them:

- Did the questioner feel under pressure to ask the next question instead of listening to the answer?
- Did the respondent feel comfortable?
- What kind of information did they get from the interview?
- How did it differ from the interview technique applied in round one?

In plenary, discuss their experiences and how appropriate different methods of getting information are to different situations. Stress the use of open-ended questions to begin the conversation and the use of closed questions to close in on themes or issues of a more specific nature where relevant.

PURPOSE

- To reflect on the effects and outcomes of open-ended versus closed questions
- To demonstrate how much information can be gained without interrupting or asking questions, but simply by listening
- To demonstrate what happens if you limit the conversation exclusively to closed questions
- Stress the needs for both methods in appropriate situations

TIME

25 minutes

INTRODUCING THE METHOD

Introduce the Time and Talk method and the resources and information inside the Resource Library.

PURPOSE

To help participants understand the background to the "Time and Talk" method and the corresponding resources

TIME

15 minutes

BREAK

GROUP RULES

ESTABLISH A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Next, participants will take part in a role-play session. Before the role-play starts, it is important to explain some ground rules that will help ensure that they feel safe and comfortable as they role-play the different scenarios:

- Confidentiality - what happens in the group stays in the group
- Respect each other
- Do not interrupt each other
- Trust each other
- Create a safe environment to practice and make mistakes
- Give descriptive, constructive feedback
- Emphasize that observing is just as active and important as role-playing
- Each consultation involves the whole group for observation and input in case anyone gets stuck
- Observation is also useful for learning
- Goals should be set for each role-play session
- Explain the importance of giving descriptive feedback

PURPOSE

To ensure that participants clearly understand the ground rules and why they are important

TIME

10 minutes

ROLE-PLAY SESSION

DOING IT THE WRONG WAY

Ask everyone in the group to think about an appointment they have had with a health care professional that did not go well. What happened? Did anything positive happen during the appointment? Ask participants to reflect on this situation and identify particular behaviors.

Next, ask the group to share examples of difficult clinical situations that they have experienced as clinicians (if not yet on placement they can be asked about their fears of certain situations) and how those situations were handled. Discuss what went well and what did not go so well and how things could have been done differently.

Construct a scenario based on this situation, e.g., an over-talkative or uncommunicative patient and the clinician. Ask who wants to role-play the clinician and the patient. Make sure enough detail is given about the situation in order for participants to be able to re-enact it.

The clinician is encouraged to over-play the wrong way of doing it and can stop at any time and ask for help from the group by requesting time-out.

Ask everyone to help build the patient 'character' by asking questions of the 'patient' about his/her life, e.g., "Where do you go on holiday?", his/her social context, job, spare time activities, etc. This is also referred to as 'hot-seating' (see Resources Library).

Before role-playing begins, ask the person playing the clinician what he/she would like to practice, for example:

- What are particular issues or challenges for you here that you would like to work on? (Have them be as specific as possible.)
- What would you like to practice and get feedback on?
- How can the group help you best?

Assign tasks to the other participants in the group. For example, you may ask them to identify and point out characteristics of verbal and non-verbal communication, e.g., one can watch the body language of the clinician and patient, one can turn his/her back to the role-players and listen to changes in the tone of voice, and others can focus on the agreed agenda, such as dealing with an over-talkative patient, and look for cues that the patient gives which might be followed up. Ask the group to make notes of what is observed and said.

Role-play the scenario within an agreed time.

REFLECTION

The facilitator brings the role-play to a close if this does not happen naturally and asks the participant playing the clinician how he/she thinks it went. Some useful questions are:

- "How do you think it went?"
- "How would you do it differently?"
- "Is there anything you would like to improve?"
- "You have defined the problem and have made a suggestion... would you like to try again?"

- "Tell me, what went well, especially in relation to the objectives you identified?"
- "What did not go as well in relation to your specific objectives?"

Then ask the patient how it felt for him/her.

As a group, provide feedback to the role-players and discuss and analyze what was observed during the role-play and how it could be done differently.

DOING IT THE RIGHT WAY

Using the same process as before, role-players now do it the “right” way. One person will be the clinician and the other the patient. You can use the same scenario as before or choose another one to demonstrate what a good appointment looks like. Get the clinician to set up the room so that it supports a welcoming atmosphere in the scenario.

Role-play the scenario. Again, the clinician can stop it any time and ask for help from the group.

REFLECTION

As before, the facilitator asks the clinician first how he/she thinks it went. This is important, as negative things can be aired by the person rather than others criticizing him/her. In pairs, the group should reflect on the skills they saw or used during the role-play. For this exercise, they can use the Competency Skills list as a starting point. They may also discuss the skills they used when observing the role-play before the break, including tone of voice, body language, etc.

PURPOSE

To illustrate the basics of communication and recognize skills and challenges

TIME

75 minutes

LUNCH BREAK

ROLE-PLAY SESSION 2

ROLE-PLAYING USING A SIMULATED PATIENT

The group reviews the list of role-play scenarios found in the Resource Library or devises their own. These could be based either or their own experience or on their hopes and fears of what might happen in the clinic.

They then choose a scenario for the role-play. Each time a new scenario is chosen, an agenda should be set for practicing a particular skill or confronting a challenge.

Then choose the actors. The person who will play the clinician leaves the room. The rest of the group develops the scenario on the chosen topic and creates a patient profile.

As before, give members of the group specific tasks and things to look out for during the role-play. These can be based on the Competency Skills list or on the clinician's own agenda for the role-play. The clinician, for example, may want to practice managing assertive behavior or breaking bad news to a patient. This might include telling parents that a child has been diagnosed with a hearing loss after neonatal screening. The tasks allocated to the group should support the focus of the role-play.

Invite the ‘clinician’ back into the room and begin the role-play. At any time, the ‘clinician’ can choose to pause the role-play and ask the group for advice on how to proceed.

End the session by asking the role-players how it felt to play out the situation and how they think it went. Ask them how they would do it differently, if they did it again. Then, ask the group to reflect on how the skills selected from the Competency Skills list were demonstrated during the role-play and how the appointment went from the patient's, clinician's and observer's points of view.

PURPOSE

To learn how to apply the new communication skills in practice

TIME

75 minutes

BREAK

REFLECTION

WHAT SKILLS WERE USED?

In pairs, the group reflects on the skills they used themselves or saw used by others during the role-play. For this exercise, they can use the list of Competency Skills as a starting point. They may also discuss the skills they used when observing the role-play before the break, including things like tone of voice, body language, and picking up cues.

PURPOSE

To understand how the different skills can be applied in practice

TIME

20 minutes

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

WORKSHOP CONCLUSION

Summarize the activities of the day. Then revert to the participants' aims for the day, which were listed during the introduction session. Discuss to what extent their aims have been met. Address any outstanding issues and answer any questions that may remain within the timeframe.

PURPOSE

To create a common understanding of what has been learned

To address outstanding issues before the end of the workshop

TIME

15 minutes