**Good Communication Skills, a pre-requisite for being a medical professional in present days- A commentary**

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Having an ill or disabled family member imposes a well-documented burden on family members (Wittenberg et al., 2013). The “spillover” effects of illness affect many aspects of family members’ lives, from physical and emotional health to quality of life and well-being (Gusi et al., 2009; Davidson et al., 2008; Northouse et al., 2007; Van exel et al., 2005). Prior research on this aspect has shown that caregivers too experience negative outcomes and it is directly related to the type of relationship (Perkins et al., 2012). Besides caregivers, non-caregiver family members can also have impact on their quality of life. Doctors and other medical staff not only treat the patient but are of immense support for the family members. However, there have been certain instances where major conflict has been observed between the doctor and patient’s family members in Indian scenario. This is due to lacunae in understanding each other’s emotions and perspectives. In a country like India where medical staff is overworked irritability can be quite common in them. Although most of the staff maintain their professional attitude, few don’t care to understand what the family is going through. There are certain modifiable factors in this context such as proper psychological training of medical staff to handle such scenarios. Qualities of calmness, politeness, giving correct and complete information, giving proper explanation, being a good listener, doing light talks in between and giving an apology when wrong are few qualities to avoid conflict. Being empathetic is also important. To develop these qualities in oneself it is very necessary to have appropriate training. Workshops focussing on these topics will be of immense help and will be a measure to break down the ongoing cycle of conflict between patient’s relatives and medical staffs. The sensitization should be done at all levels of contact starting from security guards in language and methods understandable to them. For doctors it should be started at undergraduate training period itself when the medical students are starting their in-patient postings. The workshop can be conducted in form of written assignments (such as what do they expect from medical staff when they accompany their family members to hospital) and doing role plays where they will have opportunities to learn and practice good communication skills. It should be made an essential component in training of medical staff and doctors.

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