



EDITORIAL ARTICLE

Effective Physician – Nurse communication

Olga Kadda

RN, MSc, Phd © Medical School of Athens,
Onassis Cardiac Surgery Center

Teamwork has been identified as an important component of organizing and providing care of high quality to patients. More in detail, effective communication between health professionals in clinical environment contributes significantly to the best patient's outcome.¹

Although the real issue is to keep focus on patients' care, however, there are noticed many conflicts regarding several problems such as independent practice or the leadership of a patient-centered care. Researchers underlining the obstacles between physician and nurse communication have supported that their communication has never been an easy issue as they daily face with complex treatments that arouse several controversies.²

Many studies²⁻⁴ put emphasis on understanding the deepest causes that trigger conflicts and are held responsible for failure in collaboration. The most crucial aspect of the doctor–nurse relation is its'

mutual interdependence since neither can function independently of the other. Nevertheless, doctors hold essential powers and responsibilities that have an impact on this interdependence, for example, doctors are the ones who decide, either formally or informally, whether a patient is admitted and discharged.⁵

Effective collaboration and communication between physician and nurse may improve job satisfaction and reduce the multidimensional phenomenon of burn out syndrome.^{6,7} Taking for granted that patients' care is always demanding, it is easily understood that physicians and nurses may feel tired or experience lack of energy.¹ A working environment which offers motivations, trust, communication, respect, personal and team support, and allows independence is significantly minimizing the prevalence of burnout syndrome or avoiding misunderstandings or controversies. An equal important factor for effective collaboration is willingness to collaborate as well as the personality of health professionals involving self-confidence and emotional maturity. It is important to explore the ways that each personality escapes from conflicts.²

Promoting physician–nurse communication has always been an attractive field as it is strongly associated with reduced errors in practice, reduced



nosocomial infections and improved patient's satisfaction. Moreover, communication is a prerequisite for promoting patient's safety and improving quality of care.¹

There is a need for both physicians and nurses to reestablish their common purpose in order to become a high-functioning team who as an ultimate goal has the promotion of patients' outcome.^{1, 3, 8}

References

1. Lindeke LL, Sieckert AM. Nurse-physician workplace collaboration. *Online J Issues Nurs* 2005;10(1):5.
2. San Martín-Rodríguez L, Beaulieu MD, D'Amour D, Ferrada-Videla M. The determinants of successful collaboration: a review of theoretical and empirical studies. *J Interprof Care* 2005 ;19 Suppl 1:132-47.
3. Tjia J, Mazor KM, Field T, Meterko V, Spenard A, Gurwitz JH. Nurse-physician communication in the long-term care setting: perceived barriers and impact on patient safety. *J Patient Saf* 2009;5(3):145-52.
4. Vazirani S, Hays RD, Shapiro MF, Cowan M. Effect of a multidisciplinary intervention on communication and collaboration among physicians and nurses. *Am J Crit Care* 2005;14(1):71-7.
5. Fagin L, [Garelick](#) A. The doctor–nurse relationship. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* 2004;10: 277-286.
6. Polikandrioti M. Burnout syndrome. *B.O.S. Health Science Journal* 2009; 3(4): 195-196.
7. Koutelekos I, Polikandrioti M. The burnout syndrome of health care professionals. *Rostrum of Asclepius* 2007;6(1) 1-7.
8. Morguelan B. Recognizing the elixir of excellent patient care: nurse-physician relationships. *Beginnings* 2013;33(2):10-2