

**NECESSITY OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING OF MEDICAL NURSES AS A POST GRADUATE EDUCATION**

**Julieta Gerenova**

Faculty of Public Health, Medical University-Sofia, Bulgaria [julieta\\_geo@abv.bg](mailto:julieta_geo@abv.bg)

**Todor Dimitrov**

Faculty of Public Health, Medical University-Sofia, Bulgaria, [todor99us@abv.bg](mailto:todor99us@abv.bg)

**Evgeni Dimitrov**

Faculty of Public Health, Medical University-Sofia, Bulgaria

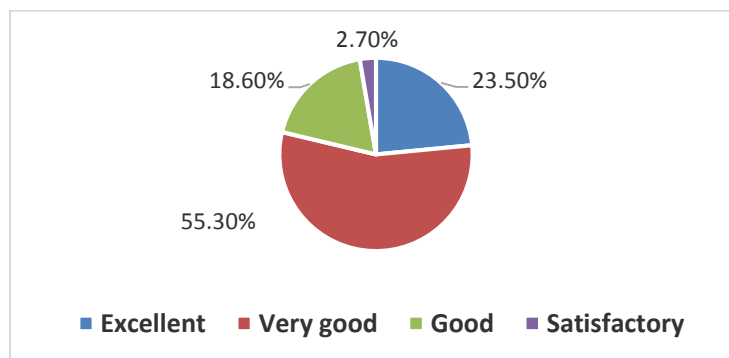
**Summary:** Professional education aims to form knowledge and skills in future professionals in order to provide the highest level of service to health care users. An essential element in healthcare professionals work is the ability to communicate: with patients and their relatives, with colleagues, with members of the multidisciplinary team. In fact, without effective communication and trust, the efforts of the healthcare professional will not have the necessary effect. The communicative process is an important information exchange, where mutual understanding and partnership are built. Regardless of the technological opportunities of the 21st century every person (particularly patient) will always be looking for a contact with professional, who will communicate, understand, sympathize and support him. In the medical professions, developing a proper style of communication with patients, relatives and colleagues is an important part of the health care professional's job. Respect and provision of information according to the competencies of the health care professional in a proper way which will be understandable for the patient / client is the basis of the medical professions. The relationship between medical staff and patients raises many significant problems in medical practice and medical deontology [1,2]. The reason for this comes from the complexity of human behavior and the need to analyze it in its psychological, interpersonal and social nature. No technical means can take on the role of health professionals who, through their daily communication, observation and interaction with patients, seek to understand the behavior and experiences of man in health and illness. Recipients of healthcare need professional care and attention to their human suffering within the disease. Therefore, medical care should include not only professional competence, but also effective communication based on personal care, expressed in terms of attention, sympathy, emotional warmth, respect and support [3, 4]. Specific training on occupational communications in healthcare is a guarantee for improved communication skills of students and healthcare professionals, as well as patient satisfaction from the empathic attitude.

**Keywords:** communication, professional communication, nurses

**The purpose** of the study is to determine the need for postgraduate nursing training in communication skills. The median age of nurses is 41 years and the average length of service in the specialty is 16 years. 150 nurses were examined in 10 hospitals in Bulgaria.

**Methods:** In order to achieve the stated purpose of the survey, a sociological method was used - questionnaire and statistic method.

Self-assessment of respondents about their communication skills



Health care professionals appreciate their communication skills above all as "very good" - 55.30%. About one-quarter of respondents rated them as "excellent", and as "good" - 18.60%. The proportion of those who categorized them as "satisfactory" was 2.70%. These data, on the one hand, show the self-critical attitude of health care professionals, but on the other hand we can interpret this data as a need to train and develop professional communications for specific health care specialties.

Table 1 Priorities for respondents in communicating with the patient are:

	Yes, Completely	Partly	Insufficient	No
Applying an individual approach to the patient's communication skills	50,80%	45,10%	3,00%	1,10%
I show respect for the patient's autonomy	71,60%	22,30%	3,80%	2,30%
I consider the patient's adaptation options	67,00%	26,10%	6,10%	0,80%

In the communication process, healthcare professionals conduct psychological and communicative quests related to knowing the individual's individuality and choosing in accordance with this variety of specific impact measures for each particular patient.

From the results of the survey carried out with the healthcare professionals, it is clear that for a very large part of them - 71.60% priority in communicating with a patient is showing respect for his / her autonomy. A further priority, also with a high percentage of 67%, is to take into account the patient's adaptation capabilities.

Table 2 Skills of respondents in conducting verbal communication with the patient:

	Yes, Completely	Partly	Insufficient	No
I provide the patient with well thought out and selected information	68,20%	27,30%	3,80%	0,80%
I use and apply specific communication techniques	42,80%	45,80%	11,80%	0,40%
I use my professional expertise	43,60%	48,50%	7,20%	0,80%

Respondent healthcare professionals determine their skills in verbal communication with the patient, best being to provide the patient with well thought-out and selected information - 68.20%. The execution of a significant part of the medical activities, care, procedures and manipulations is accompanied by the provision of information to the patient, which must be sufficiently precise and precise to understand and to be an active participant in the process. In training, these skills do not develop as well as in real patient care.

Healthcare professionals give a predominant response "in part" to their skills in using and implementing specific communication techniques and the use of their professional competence. Although the practice is the best teacher, the results show that healthcare workers should be more attracted to postgraduate skills in communication skills.

Table 3. Training needs of professional healthcare professionals in occupational communications

	Relative share in %
Techniques for verbal communication	37,50%
Listening techniques	14,80%
Developing emotional intelligence	25,00%
Developing empathy towards the patient	22,70%

The results show that, according to the surveyed health care professionals with a relatively equal share, it is necessary to train for the development of emotional intelligence and the development of empathic attitude towards a patient - 25% and 22.7% respectively. There is a need for additional training on verbal communication techniques - 37.50%. Healthcare professionals need to adhere to a specific way of verbal communication with patients to keep professional distance on one hand, and on the other - to show respect for the patient's personality and concern for his or her health problems.

The conclusions we can draw are:

1. Only half of the healthcare professionals surveyed have participated in post-graduate training courses in occupational healthcare communications. This determines the need for different forms of training, the need for continuous training due to the many changes nowadays that meet the needs for developing professional communications.
2. Professionals in health care define as a priority in professional communications the respect for the patient's autonomy (71.60%). They are fully confident in providing well thought-out and selected patient information.

#### LITERATURE

- [1] Balkanska, P., Psychological Approaches in Health Management, Bulvest 2000, S., 2009
- [2] Balkanska, P., Emphasis in Medical Practice, C: Medical Pedagogy, ESC-PRES, Gabrovo, 2010, 216-225.
- [3] Alexieva M., Deficiencies in Family Communication, Pedagogika, issue 4, 2000
- [4] Vodenicharov T., M. Mitova, L. Gateva, Medical Ethics, S., 1995
- [5] Goranova - Spassova, R., Ethical Reflection in the Preparation of Programs for Health Promotion, 37 Scientific and Technological Session, Contact 2016, Civil Idea in Action, S. 2016, p. 162-165
- [6] Dimitrova, M., I. Stambolova, Problems of professional communication of nurses, Sister Work, 42, 1
- [7] Trendafilova, A., Contemporary psycho-pedagogical approaches in the communicative training of medical staff.
- [8] Hadzhdeleva, D., Formation of Communication Skills in Students in Obstetrics Care Education, Sisterhood Delta Magazine ISSN 1310-7496, Sofia, 2014, issue 3
- [9] Hadzideleva, D., A. Dimitrova, Patient Opinion on the Role of Communication and Professional Communication in Obstetric Practice - Interdisciplinary Civil Academy - INGA, Thirty Fourth Scientific and Technical Session, TEMTO, ISSN 1313-9134 Sofia, 2014, p. 336
- [10] Hadjideleva, D., Communicative competence in obstetric care, ISBN 978-954-9318-69-2 ed. Central honey. library, Medical University - Sofia, 2016