The Doctor-Patient Relationship in the 21st Century

From
Marcus Welby to House, MD
OVERVIEW

- What does it meant to be sick?

- What do people (patients) want in a doctor-patient relationship?

- 2 sides to the relationship: Doctor and Patient.

- What forces have impacted and changed this relationship since WW II?
Overview (cont.)

- Challenges and potential barriers to the “ideal” doctor–patient encounter and relationship.
What Does It Mean To Be Sick?

- Vulnerability
- Loss of control
- Loss of bodily integrity
- Alteration of social roles
- Abnormality
- Cultural Beliefs
- Intrusion
What Do Patients want in a Doctor-Patient Relationship?

- Competence
- Compassion: empathy v. sympathy
- Communication: listening, responding, time, verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Truth telling
2 people: the Doctor and the Patient

- All relationships can be complicated.
- An imbalance is always there.
- Paternalism
- Partnership?
- Expectations
The Patient

- Vulnerable
- Anxious/scared on many levels.
- Communication and understanding.
- Roles.
- Expectations
The Doctor

- Paternalism v. Partner: “Doctor Knows Best”.
- The “expert”.
- The demands.
- The Stress.
- The Behaviors.
- Communication and understanding.
- Doctors of a Certain Age.
- The Third Person in the Exam Room.
Marcus Welby v. House MD

- Kind, paternal
- Knowledgeable: in what way?
- Technology driven.
- Science v. Art.
- Personality: what specialty chosen?
How Has the Doctor-Patient Relationship Changed?

- 18th & 19th C. Domestic Medicine: Home Based.
- Rise of Hospitals: From Almshouse to Doctor’s workshop/technical center.
- 20th C. Demise of the House call, sig.event taking medicine out of the home.
How Has It Changed (cont.)

- Rise of technology – creates need for more “experts”
- Specialization.
- Group practices.
- Economic Forces: health insurance (employer based), Medicare, Medicaid.
- Managed Care.
Change (cont.)

- Health Care Reform
- Medical Malpractice
- Strangers at the Bedside: No longer just the doctor and the patient /family.
- Strangers: lawyers, committees, govt., Insurance companies, Ethicists, administrators,
Challenges and Barriers to the Doctor-Patient Relationship

- Complexity of the system: bureaucracy, the third person in the room.
- Complexity of the patient: living longer, dying slower, more chronic illness.
- TIME: THE 7 Minute Visit
- New ways of communicating: e-mail, telemedicine.
- Economics: complex organizations, employed physicians, Insurance, the economy,
- Seeking a Healthier Life Style/Stress Mgt.
There is No Excuse

- The Art and Science of Medicine.
- Connect with the Patient.
- Know who you are and why you are a physician.
- The Next Generation of Physicians.
- Keep Your Eye on the Ethics of Medicine.
- Marcus Welby meets House, MD