

Please Face Me



I Lip Read

SAMUEL MERRITT

UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing, San Mateo Learning Center

Have You Heard? Health Literacy and Communication is a Vital Sign

Geralyn Bodeker, MS, MLISc, AHIP and Karin Kasper
Jerry Thompson, RN, MSN and Alyssa Erikson, RN, PhD
Health Assessment: N125

Remove Barriers
to Facilitate
Effective Patient
Communication



*Your Patient is a Person
First, Not a Disability*

Target Audience: Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) Students

*Nursing's Ethical Commitment to
Effective Patient Communication*
Source: (2006). American Nurse Today

This patient care story was the catalyst for the "Have You Heard?" program

"On a cold December evening, I was working in the capacity of EMT / ER tech in an eleven bed community emergency department. Upon getting a report from my charge nurse, I was assigned to a patient who was moderately cognitively impaired and hearing impaired. Utilizing the knowledge acquired in a nursing school presentation on care of the hearing impaired patient, I was able to effectively communicate with the patient and alleviate discomfort and agitation".

"Eye to eye contact, calm/quiet environment, and therapeutic touch were effectively implemented with this patient. During the cleansing process of the wound, the patient became agitated and moaned as if he were in pain. By softly rubbing his head, and holding his hand for a brief moment to reassure the patient, the agitated demeanor and verbal pain cues diminished. Because of these simple techniques, the patient was able to sit still for the ER - Physician Assistant to provide local anesthetic and repair the wound with staples." - San Mateo ABSN Nursing Student, June 2011 Cohort



"About 40% of Emergency Department (ED) patients have limited health literacy and this may influence both the reasons for seeking ED care and ED-related outcomes".

Source: (2010). Annals of Emergency Medicine

Tips on Working with Hearing Impaired Persons Strategies for Nurses

Keep the Following in Mind:

- Talk to your patients. They deserve that respect and can understand more than you think.
- Ask questions. Sometimes patients who are hard-of-hearing have trouble describing things and may say yes even when they really don't understand what you have said to them.
- Empower your patients. Help them learn how to stay healthy and to be a partner with you in their healthcare.
- Listen. Slow down and take your time. Sometimes your patient may use more than just words to communicate.

Source: Schwarz, E. (2009). Can You Hear Me? Advance for Nurses, 27-28

Implications for Nursing Practice

This experiential learning opportunity contributes to making a difference in the lives of patients who are hearing impaired or deaf. Education and training future nurses and health care professionals about health literacy will enhance patient safety through effectively and compassionately communicating with hearing impaired or deaf patients.

Q. How acquainted are you with how to communicate effectively with a hearing impaired or deaf person? (n=47)

Pre-test Answer: Very Acquainted – 4%
Post-test Answer: **Very Acquainted – 68%**

Listen and Learn

