



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

### **Behavioural Sciences, Communication Skills I**

1920-2-H4102D013-H4102D039M

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#### **Aims**

Skills to be acquired:

to manage non-verbal communication, gestures and attitudes in interpersonal relationships;

to be able to regulate the emotions of the patient, of his relatives and of the clinician in the treatment process;

to formulate possible training and communication strategies to improve treatment compliance;

to communicate with patients and relatives taking into account the socio-cultural elements that characterize the relationships between people;

explaining the patient (real or simulated) preventive health contents effectively (smoking, alcohol, psychotropic substances, nutrition etc.).

#### **Contents**

Psychological and relational elements in the patient-doctor relationship; therapeutic alliance; communication skills; verbal and non verbal communication; disease-centred medicine and patient-centred medicine; Calgary Cambridge Model

#### **Detailed program**

## General aspects

- Doctor centered vrs Patient Centered Medicine
- From “curing” to “caring”
- psychological and relational components in the doctor-patient relationship;
- building patient-doctor relationship: phases, strategies and techniques.
- the concept of "therapeutic alliance": from psychotherapy to medicine.
- From compliance to concordance: psychological aspects.
- Psychological complexity of a medical interview and its value as an instrument of intervention and change

## Communication techniques

- language and gestures
- techniques of verbal communication
- non-verbal communication and its techniques

## Communication guidelines and protocols

- the clinical conversation: the Calgary Cambridge Interview model
- breaking bad news (the SPIKES protocol)
- error disclosure (the CONES protocol)
- managing conflict and escalation (the HARD protocol)
- communication with children
- communication with a patient's family
- when communication fails: breakdowns and recovery strategies

## Emotions

- the role of emotions in communication and in the doctor / patient relationship
- strategies and techniques of emotion regulation and self-regulation

- wellness and clinical efficacy: focus on the doctor emotional health
- the subjective dimension of illness perception and experience: patient's emotional reaction
- psychological response to illness and treatment

## **Prerequisites**

general knowledge about humanities in medicine acquired in the first year course "Humanities"

## **Teaching form**

Lectures, reflective activities in small groups, clinical cases discussion, clinical conversations simulations, role-playing (es. prescribe insulin injections to a patient with needle phobia)

## **Textbook and teaching resource**

Communication Skills for Medicine, 4e Lloyd et al., Elsevier, 2018 (UK)

Skills for Communicating with Patients, 3rd Edition Jonathan Silverman, Suzanne Kurtz, Juliet Draper, CPD press, 2013 (ITA e UK)

R. Buckmann, Difficult Conversations in Medicine: Strategies That Work in Breaking Bad News, 2010, SAGE (UK)

R. Buckmann, How to Break Bad News: A Guide for Health Care Professionals (UK)

J. Groopman, How Doctors Think, 2008 (ITA e UK )

L. Sanders 2010; Every patient tells a story, Penguin

## **Semester**

second semester

## **Assessment method**

Final assessment is aimed at measuring:

- level of knowledge,
- level of inductive and deductive reasoning,
- problem solving ability.

It includes discussion of problems, analysis of clinical cases, open conceptual questions, closed questions

## **Office hours**

appointment, email contact

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