



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

### Behavioural Sciences, Communication Skills I

2021-2-H4102D013-H4102D039M

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#### Aims

At the end of the course the student acquires the following knowledge and skills:

A) KNOWLEDGE - (1) general aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication, communication models in the medical field, most common guidelines for communication in the medical field; (2) models of explanation of the basic psychological processes in human interactions, in particular relating to emotions

B) SKILLS - (1) Communicate adequately with patients and relatives also taking into account socio-cultural variables (2) Formulate possible training and communication strategies that can improve compliance with treatments (3) Explain to the patient (real or simulated) effectively preventive health contents (smoking, alcohol, psychotropic substances, nutrition etc.) (4) Recognize and adequately implement non-verbal communication, gestures and attitudes in interpersonal relationships; (5) Recognize and know the strategies to welcome adequately the emotions of the patient and his relatives in the treatment process; (6) Recognize and adequately regulate one's emotions in communication with the patient

#### Contents

Psychological and relational variables in the doctor-patient relationship; Disease Centered Medicine and Patient Centered Medicine; communication techniques; communication protocols (e.g. Calgary Cambridge Interview); verbal and non-verbal communication; therapeutic alliance; sane and vicious interpersonal cycles.

#### Detailed program

## **General aspects**

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

## **Communication techniques**

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

## **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 and 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 (DBT skills, Mindfulness skills); burnout and health professions: wellbeing and clinical efficacy. Protective factors in the clinical work: the doctor emotional health. The subjective dimension of illness perception and experience: patient’s emotional reaction; psychological variables in subjective response to illness and to treatment

## **Prerequisites**

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

## **Teaching form**

Frontal lessons, with the use of active and interactive methodologies (e.g. mentimeter, flipped classroom, buzz groups), guided discussion in the classroom, with the use of educational videos and film clips

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

It should be noted that, in the event - also in the second half of the year - of an emergency state of COVID19 or other, the lessons will be recorded and available online, with some live events on on-line platforms (e.g. Webex, Zoom, Google Meet) that will be planned and communicated on e-learning course website

## **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

In case of extension of the pandemic emergency COVID19 and official restrictions also in the second semester, the oral exams will be exclusively through on-line platforms (e.g.WebEx platform).

## **Office hours**

To make an appointment, please contact the teachers by e-mail: [mariagrazia.strepparava@unimib.it](mailto:mariagrazia.strepparava@unimib.it)

office: U38, villa Serena (Monza), room number 5-24, V floor

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