

# LEARNING ACTIVITY

## Clinical Clip: Introduction to patient 1 and Introduction to patient 2 (answers)

### Before you watch the film clips

In these film clips Gretel, the nurse, is introducing herself to the patient (Sue Felix) and taking her blood pressure.

### Nursing communication

1. This is the first time that Gretel has met the patient. What kind of information should she include in her introduction?
  - Use her full name
  - Say which university she is from
  - Say which Rn she is working with
2. What do you think Gretel might say to the patient before she begins to take her blood pressure?
  - She might explain what she is going to do
  - She might make some small talk

### Nursing behaviour

4. What kind of body language could Gretel use to help the patient feel comfortable?
  - Smile
  - Eye contact

### Watch the film clips

Watch the film clips and compare your answers to the questions above.

How do you think the patient feels in **Introduction 1**?

- Comfortable
- Relaxed

How do you think the patient feels in **Introduction 2**?

- Anxious
- Worried
- Uncomfortable

Write down in the table below some of the differences in Gretel's behaviour and language in Introduction 1 and 2

Introduction 1	Introduction 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smiles</li> <li>• Makes small talk</li> <li>• She asks what name the patient prefers</li> <li>• She asks permission</li> <li>• She asks how she feeling</li> <li>• She shows interest in the patient</li> <li>• She checks the patient is comfortable</li> <li>• She uses language the patient understands</li> <li>• She checks the patient has everything she needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not smile</li> <li>• Does not make small talk</li> <li>• She does not ask the patient's preferred name</li> <li>• She does not introduce herself properly</li> <li>• She uses an unfriendly tone of voice</li> <li>• She does not respond to the patient's discomfort and pain</li> <li>• She uses nursing terminology that the patient does not understand</li> </ul>

## Nursing communication

### A typical patient interaction

#### Introduction 1

Watch introduction 1 again.

This scenario shows you some of the typical stages of an interaction with patients. Listen to some of the phrases Gretel uses at each stage and write them in the table below. You can then practise using these phrases yourself.

N.B. the stages may not always be in this order. Sometimes small talk happens while the nurse is carrying out the procedure

<b>Greeting</b>	
<b>Introducing yourself</b>  [asking patient's preferred name]	My name's Gretel Fortmann; I'm a second year nursing student just doing my clinical placement here in the hospital. The Registered Nurse – I'm not sure if you've met her yet – Mary Jones, she'll be supervising me today ... Now, is there a name you'd prefer me to call you, or is Ms Felix fine?
<b>Making small talk</b>	How long have you been on the ward for?  Have you had any people come to visit you yet?
<b>Explaining why you are with the patient – what do you need to do</b>	Now Sue, I need to take your blood pressure – is that OK?
<b>Seeking consent/asking permission</b>	– Is that OK?
<b>Giving instructions</b>	Gretel does not give any instructions to Sue. It is not necessary as Sue has had her blood pressure taken before and is familiar with the procedure. She holds her arm out for Gretel.
<b>Finishing the conversation</b>	There we go – now Sue, is there anything else I can get for you?  Well, if you've got any questions or if your pain changes, then just let me know – you just buzz there.

### Patients' names

When you first meet patients you can call them by their title and surname:

Mr = men

Ms = woman (for both married and unmarried women)

Mrs = married woman

Miss = unmarried woman

- ❖ Some married women prefer to be called Mrs ..... and others prefer Ms.....
- ❖ Some patients are happy for you to call them by their first name. If you use their first name you do not use a title.

So Gretel uses

- ✓ Ms Felix (title and surname)
- ✓ Sue (first name only)

### Making small talk

Making small talk helps to make patients feel at ease (to feel comfortable). Patients may also begin 'small talk' topics with you.

Gretel and Sue talk about:

- ❖ Family
- ❖ Gretel's clinical practice

Other small talk topics include:

- ❖ The weather  
*Isn't it a lovely day!*
- ❖ Things around the patient  
*They're lovely flowers!*  
*Are you enjoying your book?*

### Responding to patients' comments

It is important to respond to patients' comments. Look how Gretel picks up on (responds to) what Sue has said:

Gretel: *How did you sleep last night, Sue?*

Sue: *Not too badly- still pretty uncomfortable*

Gretel: *Ah, that's a shame- well, let me know of things change and if you'd like me to speak to Mary, the Registered Nurse.*

Find another example where Gretel responds to a comment Sue has made.

Pat: *Is it normal?*

Nur: *Your blood pressure's well within the normal range, so nothing to worry about there.*

### Using every day language to explain health care to patients

Look at the different language used in Introduction 1 and 2 to talk about blood pressure.

Which do you think is better and why?

### Introduction 1

Gretel: Your blood pressure's well within the normal range, so nothing to worry about there

### Introduction 2

Gretel: Yeah, no, the systolic's about 120 and the diastolic is 88 ...well it just means it's fine.

The language used in introduction 1 is better because a patient may not understand systolic and diastolic, as these terms are specialised medical terminology.

### Non-verbal communication

These two film clips show you how important non-verbal communication is when communicating with patients. Gretel shows the importance of eye contact and smiling. There are some situations on clinical practice where it may or may not be appropriate to smile.

When do you think it would be appropriate to smile?

- When you introduce yourself to a patient **yes**
- When you introduce yourself to a nurse/facilitator **yes**
- When a patient tells you they have not slept very well **no**
- When your facilitator asks you if you had a nice weekend **yes**
- When the RN criticises the way you have helped a patient to the shower **no**
- When you enter the tea room and see other nurses **yes**
- When you join your student group to debrief with the facilitator **yes**

When do you think it is appropriate to make eye contact?

- With patients when you are explaining a procedure (e.g. blood pressure) to them **yes**
- With the RN when she/he is explaining to you what she would like you to do **yes**
- With your facilitator when he/she is giving you feedback on your clinical performance **yes**

Can you think of any situations when it might not be appropriate to make eye contact?

This is a difficult question to answer. Most times it is appropriate to make eye contact with patients in Australia. However, appropriate eye contact depends on the context, the activity and the people involved. You could talk to your tutor and your clinical facilitator about this topic. You could also observe how and when people make eye contact when you are on clinical placement.

What other non-verbal language could you use to show that you are listening/to show interest?

- **smiling**
- **facial gestures, e.g. to express surprise**
- **nodding your head**