

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Patient admission (answers)

In these film clips Simin, a second year nursing student, completes a patient admission with Joseph Yeo, a patient who was recently admitted to surgery. In one of the admissions, Simin creates a good rapport with her patient. In one of them she does not create this rapport. You can also watch an interview with Joseph, who talks about the experience of being a patient in each of these admissions. Then you can watch Simin discussing the admission with her facilitator.

Before you watch the film clips

1. Download and read the patient admission form. Make a note of any areas you do not understand.
2. If you were on clinical placement, how would you clarify these areas? What would you say or do?

Ask the facilitator or RN. For example, you could say something like 'excuse me [name of facilitator or RN], could you please tell me what this means?'

3. Are there questions on the admission form that you might find difficult to ask a patient? If so, make a note here.

There are no answers here as it depends what is difficult for **you**.

4. Are there any areas that the patient might have problems talking about? Make a note of them here.

It might be difficult for a patient to talk about recreational drug use (drugs that have not been prescribed for a medical condition they have).

5. Why do you think it is important for the nurse to gather the information about the patient at admission?

So that the nurse has a good understanding of the patient's background and can carefully and thoughtfully identify the patient's needs and plan the best care for that patient, including making a discharge plan. Also to get baseline information that the nurse can use to judge the patient's progress.

If you are not sure about the answers to these questions, you could talk to your tutor in your clinical laboratory class, talk to other students, or ask your facilitator and buddy registered nurse during your clinical placement.

Watch the 'good' admission and the 'not so good' admission

7. How would you describe the interaction between the patient and the nurse in each film?

The 'good' admission: friendly, professional, showing interest in the patient.

The 'not so good' admission: unfriendly, abrupt, not showing interest in the patient.

8. How would you describe the nurse in each film?

The 'good' admission: friendly, professional, caring.

The 'not so good' admission: unfriendly, abrupt.

9. How do you think the patient feels in each film?

The 'good' admission: comfortable, relaxed.

The 'not so good' admission: uncomfortable, not so relaxed, stressed, unsure.

Making your patient feel confident that they he/she can trust you

Fill in the columns to show what Simin does, or does not do, to make Joseph confident that he can trust her

A 'good' patient admission	A 'not so good' patient admission
How she looks (e.g. uniform)	How she looks (e.g. uniform)
Professional	Professional
How she behaves (e.g. the way she stands, eye contact, facial expression)	How she behaves (e.g. the way she stands, eye contact, facial expression)
Good eye contact with the patient – she looks at him She stands facing him She smiles	Poor eye contact- she looks at the form, not the patient She does not smile

What she says (how she asks questions; how she explains; how she responds)	What she says (how she asks questions; how she explains; how she responds)
<p>She asks questions politely, using phrases such as 'do you mind'</p> <p>She responds to his comments – when he says he was in pain, she asks if he is alright now</p> <p>She gives examples to explain what she means</p> <p>She listens to what he is saying and asks follow up questions, e.g. who will look after your dog</p>	<p>She asks the questions on the form but does not respond to the things Joseph says. This makes it seem like she is not interested in Joseph</p> <p>It sounds as if she is not listening to Joseph as she asks if he has a partner and if he has any responsibilities after he has already told her about his partner and his dog</p> <p>She does not explain medical terms she uses like MRSA</p> <p>She focuses on ticking the form rather than talking to the patient</p>

Watch the 'good' patient admission again

11. Complete the admission form as you listen
12. What did you find easy to document?
13. What did you find difficult?

Asking about family/next of kin

14. Who is important in Joseph's life?

His partner and his dog.

15. Why is it important to consider this?

To find out if he has anybody who will be with him when he goes home.

To see if he has any thing/anybody he might be worried about while he is in hospital.

16. How are these questions different- what assumptions are being about Joseph with each of these questions?

– 'Do you have a wife?'

It assumes Joseph is married. This question is usually directed at a man assuming he is married to a woman.

- ‘Do you have a partner?’

This question can be used to ask if a person is in a relationship with somebody – in the sense of a life partner. It can be asked of a man or a woman. It does not assume the person is married. It is also neutral in terms of whether the person is living with a man or a woman. It could be that:

- > a woman is living with a woman
- > a man is living with a man
- > a man and woman are living together

- ‘Do you have a husband?’

This question is usually directed to a woman and it assumes that she is married and living with a man.

17. Why is it important to identify these assumptions?

The way in which you ask a question can affect the way a person feels. If you make assumptions about people they may not feel comfortable talking with you.

Watch ‘An interview with Joseph’

18. How did Joseph feel in the ‘good’ patient admission?

- > It was a pleasant experience
- > The nurse seemed caring and supportive
- > It was like a conversation, like having a chat with a friend

19. How did he feel in the ‘not so good’ admission?

- > It was quite intimidating and official
- > It seemed the nurse didn’t care
- > She was only concerned about getting her job done and ticking the boxes
- > She didn’t make eye contact
- > She didn’t take into consideration his responses and did not use them to lead into other questions

20. What does Joseph want a patient admission to be like?

To be comfortable and more like a casual conversation.

21. Why does he want it to be like this?

Being in hospital can be overwhelming and it is important to make patients feel comfortable.

22. What strategies can you use to make sure your admissions help your patients feel comfortable?

- > Make eye contact and smile where appropriate
- > Respond to what the patient says
- > Listen to the patient's answers and use these answers to lead into the next question

Watch the debrief with the facilitator

23. What suggestions does the facilitator make to help Simin do a good patient admission?

- > She gives her some ideas about how to ask questions about mental health and drugs and alcohol
- > She suggests rewording the questions and to give the patient some examples of what you mean to make the questions clearer
- > Try and be relaxed and friendly as possible so patients may feel comfortable to give information
- > Leave the more difficult questions until you have built up rapport with patients
- > She says that when she is asking about drugs she tells patients it is confidential. She explains that she needs to know about both prescription and non-prescription medications. She explains that non-prescription medications can include drugs that a person might buy on the street
- > She explains that giving patients some examples can help patients understand why you are asking these questions
- > She tells Simin to practise talking with other students and other people in her daily life so that she can practise making small talk

24. Why is it important to have a discussion with your facilitator following a new activity?

- > To get some feedback on what you did. You could talk about what you think you did well and what you think you need to improve

> To ask about things that you did not understand

25. Whose role do you think it is to initiate these discussions – yours or your facilitator's?

Both. You can approach your facilitator and ask if you can talk about something you have just done. Your facilitator might meet you in the ward and ask 'how are you going?'.... 'do you have any questions?' This is an opportunity to talk to your facilitator about the things you have been doing and to ask any questions.

26. Where do you think these kinds of discussions might happen?

In the corridor, in a tea room or a patient lounge.

27. After a discussion like this, what could you as a student do to help you continue to improve your language and your nursing communication?

You could go back to the patient admission form and write down the questions you found difficult. Practise rewording these questions and include some examples where relevant to make the question clearer for a patient to understand.

You could ask the facilitator or RN you are working with to listen to you asking the questions.

Nursing Communication

Creating a Professional Identity (1)

The way you talk to patients will project an identity – that is it will make you sound friendly/unfriendly; polite/rude; caring/uncaring.

In the ‘good’ admission, Simin sounds as if she cares about the patient. She uses non-verbal language to help develop this rapport with the patient and she also uses spoken communication in a way that makes Joseph feel comfortable. One way she makes Joseph comfortable is by telling him what she is going to do.

Telling the patient what you are doing

Before Simin begins to ask Joseph questions about his admission, she introduces what she is going to do by saying:

Simin:... Now, I need to - I've been asked to fill um the admission form with you and so I'll ask you a couple of questions.

Joseph: Okay.

Simin: But it won't take a long time. Is it all right for you?

Joseph: Yeah, that's fine, absolutely.

1. Underline the words she uses in the above sentence that help Simin seem friendly.
2. Here are some other ways she could have introduced the admission. Which do you think you should use if you want to seem professional and caring? Place a by the ones you think you might use:

You must now answer some questions about your admission

I just want to ask you some questions about why you are here

I will now ask you some questions that you have to answer and it will take a long time

I need to fill out a form so I need you to answer some questions

I just need to get some information about you and what brought you to hospital. It won't take too long

Creating a Professional Identity (2): Responding to patients' comments

Watch how Simin responds to the patient's comments about his dog in the 'good' admission. Her responses also help to create an image of her as a caring and friendly nurse.

Joseph: ...I live with my partner and a dog.

Simin: And your dog?

Joseph: Yeah.

Simin: How old is he?

Joseph: Two.

Simin: Two, that's good.

Joseph: Two. He's adorable [laughs].

Simin: If you come to the hospital - if you need to stay in ... who will take care of your dog?

Joseph: Oh, that reminds me. We have left the dog on his own since last night. I should get my partner to go home and check on him.

Simin: ...your partner can take care of him.

Joseph: Yeah.

Simin: Okay, so except for your pet do you have any other person you need to take care of?

Simin shows she is listening to the patient and showing interest in him by asking him about his dog. Patients might be worried about their pets if there is nobody to look after them.

Compare this to how Simin responds in the 'not so good' patient admission

Simin: Okay, do you live alone?

Joseph: No, I live with my partner and a dog.

Simin: Okay, you have your dog. Um do you have any responsibility for other people?

Joseph: No. I'm responsible for my dog, but not for anyone else.

There are other examples where Simin makes comments that show she is listening to the patient, for example:

Joseph: I had a really severe back pain last night after I got home from work. I took two painkillers, but that didn't help. It got worse in fact and so I asked my partner to take me to the hospital.

Simin: Wow, are you all right now or...

Joseph: Yeah, I'm much better now.

Simin: So you're feeling better?

Joseph: Yes, thank you.

Simin: Okay, that's good. Do you know what medication you take?

3. Look at the transcript and underline other comments like this that you can use to respond to patients.

Asking the patient questions

In a patient admission you will need to ask a lot of questions. It is important that the patient understands the questions, and that you understand the answers. Although some of Simin's questions are not 'perfect grammar' they are still clear for the patient.

Simin uses different strategies when asking questions.

- > Complete questions:

'Have you ever been diagnosed with MRSA or VRE?'

- > A summary of the previous information and then a question

'Okay, so except for your pet, do you have any other person you need to take care of?'

- > An abbreviated question (this is useful when you are asking a number of questions on the same topic)

Simin: Oh you wear glasses. Do you have any contact lenses?

Joseph: No.

Simin: And hearing aids?

Joseph: No.

Simin: Walking aids?

4. Look at the patient admission form and the transcript of the video again and write down the questions you would ask a patient to get the information required on the admission form.
5. Practise asking these questions. You can practise with other students.