

Communicating with emotional competence: The Big Changes



**Participants' analysis
of what they do
differently after
training process**

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Follow up course

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All participants

Referencing and acknowledging the iCARE-Haaland model

- *Please feel free to use and adapt the material in this presentation, and the model it is built on, by referring to the model, and the authors:*
- This presentation is adapted from «**Communicating with emotional competence: The Big Changes**», which is part of the learning materials in the iCARE-Haaland model.
- **To reference this content please use the following:** Haaland A, with Boga M, 2020. Communicating with awareness and emotional competence: introducing the iCARE-Haaland model for health professionals across cultures. With contributions from training teams, Vicki Marsh and Sassy Molyneux
- <https://connect.tghn.org/training/icare-haaland-model/>
- The authors' names should remain on the presentation, with a by line recognizing the person who (has adapted and) is presenting the presentation

What has changed?

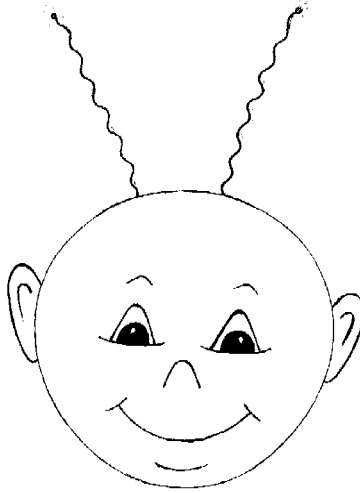
- Overall improvement in relationship with patients, colleagues and supervisors
- Confidence in work and communication methods
- Skills to stop automatic reactions, focus on patients
- Understand, respect and take care of your own and of patients' emotions



Key changes: Patients

More confidence and trust in own skills

Increased awareness



Listening better to patients



Stepping back

Key changes: Patients (and colleagues)

Confidence, safety, power and conflicts

- **Making the environment safe for patients** – to facilitate better communication
- **More confidence and trust in own skills** – feeling safe
- **Getting a perspective on using power**
- **Handling conflicts in a conscious way**

Key changes: Patients

Seeing patients as persons

- *”First i like greeting my patients and making jokes with them, make them laugh so that they can open up. I communicate with them in our language”*
- *“Warm my way in to the patients, greet them with a smile and ask how they are and deal with their fears before getting the information that i need.”*

Key changes: Patients

Treating patients with respect

- *“ Before doing the course I used to expect colleagues / patients to greet me when they walk into the ward, nowadays I am the one who greet them and ask them how I can help them. This makes them feel good, and accepted. I also feel good when they open up to me”*
- *“I have noticed that when I treat patients with respect they are easier to handle and are less fussy. They seem to gain trust and confidence in me (the system by extension). When I treat patients with respect, I stay stable and strong. Even when sometimes some do not appreciate, I do not feel guilty because I know I have done my best.”*



Key changes: Patients

Responding well to patients' emotions

- *“ I Calm them down and apologise about the poor service and promise to look into the matter. Giving them time helps as they vented frustrations and it was also an opportunity to find the root cause of the problem”*
- *“I take time to calm them and understand their concerns without judging them”*
- *“I now have time (a change in me) for them. I always find time to listen to the other side of their story. Have discovered that their anger is due to some fear so giving one an opportunity to express that fear they relax.”*

Key changes: Patients

Recognizing and responding well to patients' emotions: Effect

- *When you have recognized and responded well to a patient's emotions, how does it make you feel?*
- *"I feel confident and that I have the trust of the patient"*

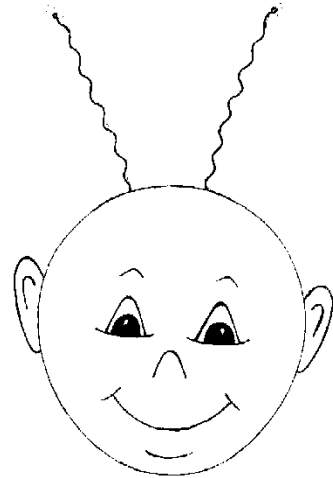
The effect:

- *"It boost confidence on dealing with the rest of the patients"*
- *" It feels fulfilling"*
- *"I go home sober and stress free mind."*
- *"Makes me want to repeat what i did right and make it the regular practice"*

Key changes: Patients

Taking a step back

- *“In all these emotions, I just fold up and take a break to gather my energies. Go somewhere quiet and take a rest, and reflect. The changes are in the effort of not taking frustrations out on people, but taking time off to reflect” .*
- *“I feel awful, but I sit back and review my strategies with an aim of correcting and changing my strategy. This time I put a lot of focus on my direction and not jumping into irrational conclusions. In such a conflicting situation I change the focus to the issue and not the person. This lessens the heat.*



Key changes: Patients

Appreciating patients effort

- *“I greet the mother and tell her that it is good she has brought the child to the hospital, and we would do whatever we can to help the child recover*
- *“I appreciate the parents for bringing the child to hospital. Try and allay anxiety by explaining what is going to be done in order to arrive at a diagnosis including any samples taken and procedures needed.*



Key changes: Patients, colleagues, families

Reduction in conflicts

Moments of clashing with patient or colleagues have reduced tremendously

- *I've become so much aware of the consequences of what will happen if I react harshly or if I don't appreciate the person I am dealing with. Thanks to the awareness skill, is very crucial and makes me always to adjust in situations and this makes it possible to avoid conflicts with colleagues.*

Key changes: Patients

Giving effective advice

- *“I give information in an elaborative manner. Always practising patience because I am consciously aware that this is new information on my clients and also consciously aware of their thinking patterns: at that moment they are at a loss.”*
- *“I simplify the message then let them repeat it in their own way”*
- *“Keep what I have to say short and simple and clearly focused and have enough time to explain, rephrase and discuss, address their concerns. Ensure I explain the benefits and why they need to do it”.*

Key changes: Colleagues

Listening, and showing respect

- *“I had always seen some colleague as argumentative and uncooperative. So these days I ask myself why is this person this way and what if I listen to him? And for sure just listening made me get his point”*
- *“Have learnt to show respect and appreciation when they have done well”*
- *“Before i used to interrupt so much when talking to my colleagues but now I've learnt to listen actively. I find peace, no quarrels any more”*



Key changes: Colleagues

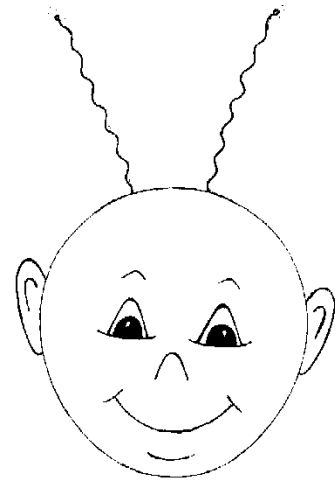
Communicating better

- *“I have learnt to remain calm when communicating with colleagues, makes me feel more in control than before”*
- *“Am good at giving feedback to colleagues and supervisors, in the past, I had a challenge in critiquing colleagues if I felt they had not done well, but now I am comfortable to give feedback without offending them.”*

Key changes: Colleagues

Taking a step back – from automatic emotional reactions

- *“Of course I feel the rage uprising when angry but currently I am able to get an inside rage telling me hey why are you getting angry? What is it that is making you angry? And hey why not handle it. Then slowly I calm down and am able to control my anger”*
- *“What is happening these days is that I get irritated, yes. But I contain it. Do whatever task as required to do peacefully then handle my triggers later in a tolerable way.”*
- *“I have learnt to remain calm and not get sucked into the emotions being exchanged”*



Key changes: Colleagues and patients

Managing own emotions

- *“I have become aware of situations that make me feel good and bad at the same time. When I am appreciated and respected my spirits become high and this promotes my performance. I can smile for long and become energetic and even overcome myself without noticing or complaining”*
- *“I am more calm and patient with clients and colleagues. Before I react, I take time to think of my action towards the other person and that there is a reason for every action and thus am not judgmental. I am able to control my emotions most of the time although once in a while I get carried away and then awareness comes later.”*

Key changes: Colleagues

Handling conflicts with colleagues

- *“What I do is to give the other a chance to express themselves out without me interfering because I may have caused the conflict. Then I start by apologizing; this calms the other party down, and once in same level, we can talk and understand each other”*
- *“Once I am able to take responsibility then I’ve learned it is very easy to solve a conflict”*
- *“With my new skills I can now take action to discuss and solve a conflict without hurting my feelings”*

Key changes: Colleagues

Handling conflict with colleagues: Work in progress

- *“Initially I evade to let hot issues cool down a bit, then later I approach the situation diplomatically. An example is when emotions are running high e.g about colleagues, I tell them we will look into the issue, that they should take a big breath and relax and the issue will be sorted. When they are calmer, then I get the story and main issues. It is still work in progress since every situation is unique”*
- *“I wait for things to cool down then we sit down to find out the cause of the conflict and look for a solution to the problem although it is not so easy but it works.”*

Key changes: Supervisors

Less fear, more cooperation

- *”I now work with my supervisor without fear or tension».*
- *“ Before I used to treat these people with unknown fear and cowardice for no reason at all. But now I am very free with people I respect especially my supervisors. Thanks to this training. I am now very free and I am in a better position to discuss.”*
- *“In the past I avoided expressing my feelings if I wasn’t happy with the supervisor. I now have a way of expressing my displeasure without offending my supervisor as well minding my safety”*

Key changes: supervisors

Taking a step back

- *“I became aware of my physical and mental exhaustion at work especially when I felt the boss was being impossible. Took time off to be away and concentrate on my own things and I felt happier”*
- *“I took time away to reflect. The different environment helped me focus on other important things. That helped in reducing my feelings of frustration. The change was to not react in the heat of the moment when I was thoroughly bored with someone. To control and be aware of what I say and the consequences.”*

Insights



Insights: Communicating well with patients

Greetings, and respect

- *“I have realised that just greeting people can make one open up. Listening is one of the best recipes to having something. Feel safe.”*
- *“Actually if you show respect to anybody and appreciate s/he will feel grateful at last. This is not achieved by doing big things to the patients - just simple, welcoming and greeting the patient, followed by offering a seat can really make the patient free to expose exactly the really issues and in the long run can get the best service!”*

Insights: Communicating well with patients

Job satisfaction



” I have realized that most of our patients had been misdiagnosed due to poor communication. I find it very enjoyable listening to my patients and also learn from them and in the long run we are both very happy. Even in the evening when I go back home I feel at ease as I left my workplace happy”

Insights: Communicating well with patients

A soldier or a civilian: a patient is a patient!



"I talk to my patients as if they are civilians while they are actually soldiers who will always listen to command. But I realized that a patient is a patient whether a civilian or a soldier - they all need to be listened to and be appreciated as human beings!"

Insights: seeing where you need to change

Stop judging – find the reason(s)

- *“There was a patient who used to come to the clinic late, so I was always mad on him, but later I thought I should know why he was always late/dirty etc. The reason was so terrible that I regret up to now.”*
- *“A mother brought her child with a lot of things/strings tied on the hands and waist. I stopped myself from judging that she is a believer of ‘juju’. Once she saw I was not paying attention to her strings, she went on to talk freely”.*



Insights: Communicating with supervisors

Letting our supervisors know our reactions

- *“What I have learnt is that I should make my supervisors aware of my reactions in a good way than just hiding them from them. It may kill me one day. That experience was not good. My blood pressure rose. And our supervisors should not be easy to make unfair judgments about us easily and stick to them, they may just be wrong and this may adversely affect the lives of those whom they supervise”.*
- *“I am a supervisor too and this was a great lesson in the way I should handle my juniors.”*

These skills are just handy!

- *“Generally, I use these skills wherever I go, at home, when I visit another office, the market place, in a gathering of whatever nature, on phone etc. I mean, these skills are just handy.”*
- *“I am so grateful because I am so confident and prepared in communicating rather well. This has boosted my initiative to take up challenges especially at my work place.”*
- *“I have learnt to be professional and accept the things I can’t change but remain respectful”*

Stopping automatic reactions

- *“Not automatic at all! It takes a lot of self control. Instincts tell me to tell this person a piece of your mind, but reason tells me that doing that will only worsen the situation. One situation is when I felt a boss was talking down to me. I wanted to tell him a piece of my mind but decided just to remain calm, give points and facts and remain professional. In the long run, he comes out as the one with tantrums and I hope he reflects on that. Meanwhile I remain professional.”*
- *“I do not react automatically, i have the power to control myself.”*

Role model to my colleagues

- The majority of you felt your colleagues saw you as role models:
- To a large extent (most), To some extent (a few)
- *“The nurse covering one day had a burnout during her working session in the hospital, a colleague had talked in a bad manner. Because she knew I am doing communication training she came to me for advice on what to do”.*
- *“A patient told my colleague the way I handled them well and good welcome. Then she commented and said “it’s the effect of communication skills training”*

Common challenges

experienced by participants (1)

Dealing with death and dying

- *“Like when I was to tell a patient that the disease she was suffering from was chronic and terminal that made me feel hope less and helpless. In fact I evaded the whole story”*
- *“Death – dealing with parents explaining a disease with terminal outcome. When they don’t respond to treatment - dealing with relatives”*

Challenges (2)

Handling conflicts

- *“At time I fear of what the other party will have to say. What is they may not want to listen to me? What if they smack at me? I still feel unsafe to use these skills?”*
- *“Handling conflict with openness. More techniques on conflict solving should be given or taught to us.”*
- *“I think I need skills to handle conflicts well since still I am not very good at especially where I am not the origin of the conflict”*

Challenges (3)

- ***Interacting with Colleagues who have not been to the training***
- *“They usually make statements like ‘aaah, where is that time and patience to tolerate some things’*
- *And when you are trying to suggest (in a good way) the need to attend this training they say ‘I have been to communication training before there is nothing new. I use all those methods you are talking about’”*
- *“Some colleagues feeling superior than others e.g. she’s my junior, what can she teach me. Others saying communication skills in a very short course, covering only one week, how comes, you’re doing it for months!!*

Challenges (4):

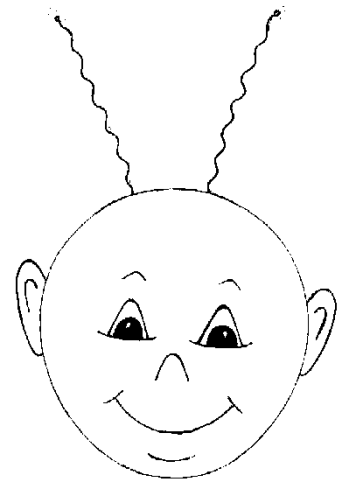
Interacting with supervisors

- *“When I have to tell her/him that what ever they have done has hurt me. Not showing my emotions but giving a clear message and saying no when I really need to say no*
- *“Challenge when I feel respect is lacking or is one way”*
- *“It’s not easy to make him/her to look at things from my perspective especially when I sense s/he doesn’t understand me”*

Challenges(5):

Old self popping up!

- *“Generally I must say this course has done me good. I really appreciate. Although I must confess at times am not sure where my antennae faces (haha) but I always realize when this is so and bring it up! I feel the incidences when I loose control is becoming less as time goes by and my approach to situations is changing a lot and mostly for the better”*
- *“Sometimes I find yourself back to normal, when i sit and reflect i regret on the way i responded to the issue but with time I think I will be able to adjust and always try to be aware of the scenario before I continue”*



Additional changes you wish for

Yourself:

- *“To improve on speaking skills so that what I mean to say is what comes out”*
- *“Practice, practice and more practice! will be very helpful”*

Colleagues/supervisors

- *“Encourage them to join the course to learn how good it is”*
- *“To attend the course so that they also learn to communicate effectively without using the military style”*

Suggested topics for follow up course

- Managing emotions and handling conflicts
- Dealing with bad news/death
- Controlling moods and not judging others
- How to communicate well with our teenagers at home
- Giving positive feedback

“Now I reflect at the past with total astonishment. I’m proud of the change I’ve acquired in this training!”

