



YOUR PATIENT/CLIENT SEEMS UNCOMFORTABLE FROM THE CONSULTATION SINCE HE FINDS IT INTRUSIVE IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE.

Knowing the social and/or medical background of a person is essential for the professional to identify the most appropriate treatment plan and way to approach them. This is why the first consultation, both in the medical and the social sector, plays a crucial role for the definition of the next steps that need to be taken.

Sometimes, due to the lack of access to medical history and the absence of records, professionals have to face the risk of inadequate personal history. Inefficient communication also, between the professional and the individual and lack of access to interpretation services can complicate the process of history taking and understanding of the experienced problems. These can result to inefficient treatment and poor assistance for the individual. In addition, another issue that needs to be taken into account, especially for mental health issues is the cultural aspects of mental health and illness which differ from one culture to another and can lead to misconceptions. Against this backdrop, setting up an efficient and clear first consultation service or activity will help professionals get a comprehensive image of the individual.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

An ER nurse welcomes a young Albanian woman accompanied by her husband. The woman cannot speak the national language, nor English and so, her husband translates what the nurse says for her.

This is the woman's first time, in a foreign country's ER and she has a bad stomach ache. The nurse cannot find her medical history in the common online repository, therefore she starts asking her husband details on her condition (past sicknesses or diseases, previous pregnancies, particular medicines, etc.). After a while, both the woman and her husband feel uncomfortable, they want to stop the consultation and leave the ER, although the wife feels very bad. They feel intimidated by the nurse's attitude because they do not understand the reason for so many personal questions.

SOLUTION

The nurse or one of her colleagues can accompany the couple in a separate room, where he/she can explain better why it is useful for ER personnel to know her medical history and that all this information will not be used for any other scope, nor shared with anyone without their expressed permission.

OPTION 01

Speak in an easy, understandable tone. Do not use strictly, technical terms. Explain to them the reasons why it is important for you to know their history and clarify that your work is not linked to migration services' procedures.

OPTION 02

Ask information from the family about previous experiences of physical or mental health issues, if you think it is needed. Use the information, as a "bridge" between you and your patient/client.

OPTION 03

Use images if possible and appropriate, in order to understand the patient's/client's history.

OPTION 04

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