



Promoting Patient Engagement in the Time of COVID

We are in the midst of unprecedented times. We are adapting our clinical practices to best serve patients and keep our communities safe. See below for some practical, evidence-based tips to use in your practice.

Creating Partnership with Patients: Acceptance, Compassion, Evocation

Be non-judgmental.
You are the expert on the professional topic, but not on the patient.
Consider that telehealth is new for the patient just as it may be new for you – this can be nerve-wracking.
Be curious about what the patient knows or understands already.
Work collaboratively.

Conversation Guide using Open-Ended Questions, Affirmations, Reflections, Summaries

Start your encounter with an open-ended question:
“What is the most important thing to address now?”
“What are you hoping to achieve during our meeting today?”
Give a reflection nearly every time your patient speaks, especially when expressing fear or anxiety.
Before educating, ask a patient what they know:
“What do you already know about COVID-19?”
Ask permission to educate.
“Is now a good time to tell you some more about...”
At the end, give a summary with an open-ended question.
“What did I miss?”
“What questions do you have?”

Considerations for Telehealth

Be Aware Of...
Patient’s clinical & cognitive status.
Patient’s technology – simplest option.
Is parent/guardian permission required?
Environment - reasonably quiet/well lit.
Use headphones/headset to maintain patient privacy and improve sound quality.
Be familiar with the MUTE button – be prepared to coach patients on how to unmute themselves.
Speak slowly.
Be concise, as possible – be mindful of cognitive impairment.
Can require more energy than in-person communication.
Be yourself.

Practicing these Strategies

To enhance ACE:
Remind yourself the 2-3 reasons you went into your profession.
Acknowledge that your patients are scared, and perhaps you are as well.
Ask yourself what 2 things you know about your patient (NOT medical information). If you don’t know, ask.
To improve your use of the skills:
Practice with colleagues & your own family members
Pick one goal (Ex: include 1 affirmation per encounter)
Be patient with yourself.

If you have questions about the Patient Engagement Program (PEP), please visit:
www.hopkinspep.org or @JohnsHopkinsPEP