HOW TO TEACH COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN MEDICINE
Communication between doctors and patients changed over time:

Medical paternalism physicians dominated patients

Collaborative relationship equal doctor - patient relationship
COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Good communication of physicians and all other members of the medical team are an important part of quality health care.
According to today’s standards physicians are required to have excellent:

- knowledge
- communication skills
- examination skills
- problem-solving skills

Communication turns theory into practice, a way to communicate is as important as what is being told to the patient.
Methods of teaching communication skills include:

• Learning the actual skills (observation and evaluation)
• Work on attitudes
• Cognitive learning (theory)
It is necessary to educate both STUDENTS and TEACHERS.
EDUCATION

• Facilitators (teachers) need help define what to teach and how to teach

• Those who learn (students, doctors) have to understand what to learn and how to learn
Different approaches to the development of training programs in communication skills

Evidence based approach

- The exact choice of communication skills that need to be a part of the training and lead to changes in clinical practice

Skills based approach

- When one learns the skills through education more specific communication issues and challenges can be attempted
• Education should include teaching of:
  - Skills
  - Attitudes,
  - problems encountered in real life clinical practice
Education throughout at all levels

• Use the same principles of learning and teaching and teach the core skills at all levels
• Continuous program on all years of study
• Patient oriented approach
TYPES OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SKILLS related to content - what?
(scientific professionals communicate through questions and answers, information seeking)

PROCESS skills - how?
(verbal and non-verbal communication with the patient)

PERCEPTUAL skills – what do they think and feel?
(skills, attitudes, awareness)
CONCLUSION

• Processing, perceptual and conceptual skills must be integrated into the curriculum because when they are taught separately conflicts emerge and the maximum of compliance and efficiency in patient care is not achieved!