

# Research explores effective healthcare communication

August 4 2011

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Unsatisfactory communication during healthcare provision may lead to misdiagnosis, incorrect treatment and even death. To analyse and improve communication within the hospital Accident and Emergency (A&E) setting, Prof. Diana Slade of PolyU's Department of English and her team are collaborating with Tuen Mun Hospital in a pioneering research project entitled "Emergency communication: Improving the quality and safety of patient care through effective communication". This project will examine communication encounters between doctors/nurses and patients in the hospital's A&E Department to identify the feature of successful and unsuccessful encounters.

In March this year, Prof. Christian M.I.M. Matthiessen, Chair Professor and Head of the Department of English, and Prof. Salde convened the First International Symposium and Roundtable on Healthcare [Communication](#) in Hong Kong. Organized by both the Department of English and the Faculty of Humanities, the event brought together researchers and healthcare practitioners from around the world to explore healthcare communication, identify ways to achieve high-quality patient-centred healthcare, and manage and minimize risk.

During the Symposium, Dr E. Angela Chan, Associate Head and Associate Professor, School of Nursing, presented the findings of a research project exploring nurse-patient communication. Focus group interviews were adopted in the study and thirty-nine registered [nurses](#) had participated. The findings reveal that, by integrating communication into routines as intended actions, nurses demonstrate that communication

and relationships building with patients does not take extra time. In fact, good communication and relationships with patients help nurses to save time. Dr Chan concluded that nurses' communication behaviour is closely related to their perception of communication.

There is a need for a paradigm shift in thinking that therapeutic communication requires extensive time. Additionally, nurses should recognize the value of short iterative interactions and chitchat as quality communication that allows them to better understand their patients and provide patient-centred care.

This article was first appeared on the *PolyU Milestone*, June 2011 Edition

Provided by ResearchSEA

Citation: Research explores effective healthcare communication (2011, August 4) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-08-explores-effective-healthcare.html>

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