

Physicians use complex process in addressing non-patient requests

January 9 2018

When confronted with a medical request from family or friends (non-patients), physicians follow a complex process in deciding how to respond.

According to a focus group study of 33 family medicine residents and 16 senior physicians, physicians first orient themselves to the situation: who is this person; what is he or she asking of me, and where are we?

They also consider the nature and strength of the relationship with the non-patient, their level of trust in their own knowledge and skills, potential consequences of making mistakes, the importance of [work-life balance](#), and the risk of disturbing the individual's relationship with her/his physician.

Senior physicians apply more nuanced considerations when deciding whether or not to respond; residents experience more difficulties in dealing with these requests, are less inclined to respond, and are more concerned about disturbing the existing patient-[physician relationship](#).

Although non-patient requests of physicians are common, they are rarely formally discussed. The authors suggest developing facilitated group discussions to help residents gain an understanding of and confidence in addressing such issues.

More information: Esther Giroldi et al. Family Physicians Managing Medical Requests From Family and Friends, *The Annals of Family*

Medicine (2018). [DOI: 10.1370/afm.2152](https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.2152)

Provided by American Academy of Family Physicians

Citation: Physicians use complex process in addressing non-patient requests (2018, January 9) retrieved 4 July 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-01-physicians-complex-non-patient.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.