Patient-Centred Approach

1. Actively explore a patient's experience with a problem by inquiring about:
   1.1. what they feel in connection to their problem (**feelings**)
   1.2. how they explain what they are experiencing (**ideas**)
   1.3. the effect it is having on their life (**impact on function**)
   1.4. how they hope the physician will be able to help them address the problem (**expectations**)

2. In assessing a clinical problem attempt to gain a greater knowledge and understanding of the whole person by asking about their context (i.e. who else is in their life (family, partner, child), who or what their supports are, other social factors (work, finances, education, etc.)

3. In moving toward developing a management plan for a patient's problem integrate a patient's context with their illness experience in a clear and empathic way.

4. In attempting to address a problem work with the patient to come to a shared understanding of it and each person's role in addressing it by:
   4.1. encouraging discussion
   4.2. providing the patient with opportunities to ask questions
   4.3. encouraging feedback
   4.4. seeking clarification and consensus
   4.5. addressing disagreements

5. In finding common ground around the management of a problem incorporate relevant health promotion and prevention.

6. Approach patient's problems with a realistic and longitudinal view which respects and appropriately balances the priorities of the patient and the physician; that considers the resources of the individuals and the community.

*College of Family Physicians of Canada*

*Examples of Dimensions of Competence in Family Medicine, Working Group on the Certification Process*

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