

2023 EKO Conference: Poster Submission

Research Team

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Novice Clinicians' Reflect on Learning About Listening and Communication Skills

Abstract (word count: 347)

Background: Most complaints about healthcare encounters from patients were about communication issues (Skar & Soderberg, 2018) and people feeling they were not listened to (Kagan, 2008). Listening and communication are essential skills for clinicians, affecting relationships in clinical practice, the quality of health care, and client outcomes. Clinicians want their clients and families to feel heard and supported. Good clinical listening is linked with better quality outcomes such as improved client understanding of medical and/or treatment information; improved mental health; and decreased anxiety, stress, and misinterpretation of information. Despite the importance of learning to listen, effective strategies to help develop effective skills and competencies of listening are often neglected in the training of new professionals.

Purpose: This study explored novice clinicians' perspectives about the impact of an educational intervention on their listening skill development and the usefulness of the "*Effective Listening and Interactive Communication Scale*" (ELICS; King et al., 2012), a validated self-report measure capturing four clinical listening stances (i.e., Receptive, Exploratory, Consensus-Oriented, and Action-Oriented Listening) to develop students' listening skills.

Methods: Pre-service novice clinicians (students in the first semester of their Master of Clinical Science training program at Western University) completed a Learning to Listen educational module designed to develop clinical listening and communication skills. The module consisted of several components including a Learning to Listen lecture, a self-assessment of listening using a unique clinical listening measure, a listening lab involving facilitated interprofessional discussions of clinical listening videos, and self-reflection. 135 novice rehabilitation clinicians (disciplines: audiology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology) completed the ELICS measure prior to and after the Learning to Listen module and completed written reflections during and after the intervention. A codebook thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data.

Results: Novice clinicians found that learning about communication skills and clinical listening stances, completing a self-assessment of listening skills (i.e., the ELICS measure), and engaging in facilitated interprofessional discussions and self-reflection supported their learning and listening skill development. This poster highlights the key themes from the study and provides implications for practice for both novice rehabilitation clinicians and healthcare educators.