

Care Beyond Medicine

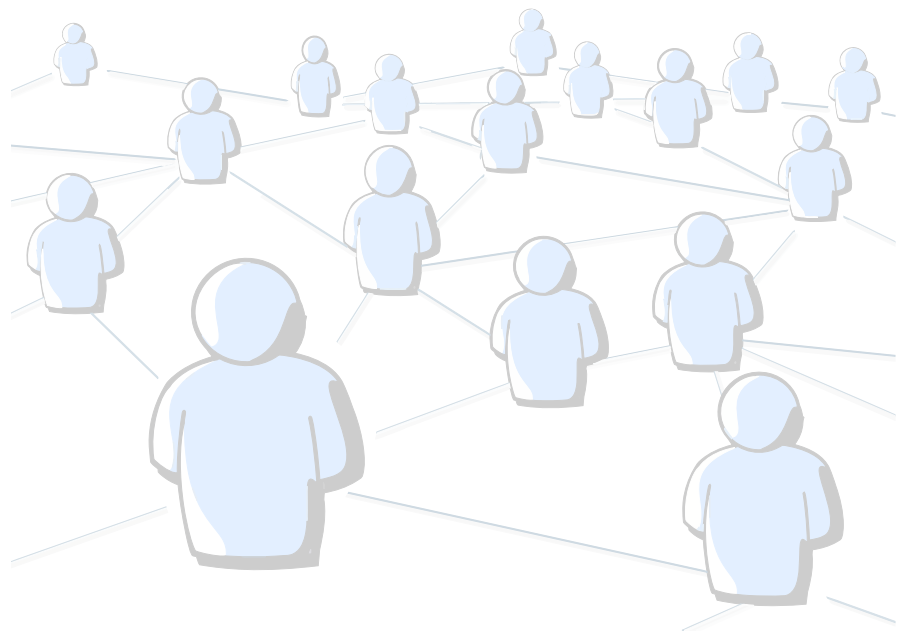
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Touch. There is great significance and impact embedded within the smallest, non-medically related things in healthcare. It is common for patients to exude a sense of loneliness or anxiety driven by the silence of a medical facility. It is amazing how the presence of a comforting hand or how a sentence or word could greatly impact someone's mood or experience while changing their outlook on their environment and situation. To many, time is relative. Criteria that succeeds in helping someone endure their situations easier does not always involve hours of quality time or services with the biggest expenses, but is sometimes found within the smallest actions that make the biggest difference.

Understanding. Sometimes it feels like ignorance tends to be overshadowed with lack of understanding. The level of cognition and awareness tends to be undermined when it comes to children, special needs individuals or those with physical, verbal, auditory, or visual impairments. It is easy to assume that these individuals can be distracted with superficial or materialistic things but despite the distractions, they will always long for familiar social interaction. We can walk away and assume that the need and desire for physical or verbal comfort is lessened due their perceived lack of cognition. However, the level of receptiveness and attentiveness of their surroundings shows you otherwise. These individuals may have a difficult time communicating and conveying their thoughts in a manner that most are used to, but their level of awareness and expressed actions will show you that they are more aware and cognizant of their situation than you may have previously assumed.

Patients are People First. Due to the busy and stressful nature of healthcare, there are bits of patient's lives that may be easily or unintentionally be overlooked. Aside from the presenting physiological manifestations or complaints a patient may present, recognition of a patient's culture, respect for their race, and a brief understanding of their religion can help any healthcare professional better treat and care for people. Whether they encourage patients to seek spiritual guidance to aide them with their psychological well-being (ex: referring to the Quran/Bible, carrying out Namaz/prayer, asking Allah/God for help/guidance, or Buddhist meditating), curate a regimen that avoids conflicts with or conflicts the least with their cultural practices (ex: dietary restrictions during religious holidays such as Ramadan or treatment alternatives to blood transfusions for Jehovah's Witnesses), evaluate the patient's cultural diets (ex: food that tends to be high in oil), or educate themselves to prevent any subconscious racial prejudices (ex: getting categorized with Muslim extremist that does not represent their incredibly kind, giving, and peaceful religion), patients will feel more like a person with potentials of becoming more willing to listen and open up about their health.

Care Starts with You. The “You” encompasses everyone involved in the facility. From the janitorial staff, medical professional, to management. Each individual, regardless of occupation and quantity of patient interaction, was given a position to improve the quality of their team which inevitably promotes the patient’s experience as well as quality of care by directly or indirectly contributing to the patient’s level of comfort, compliance, and trust. Working as a team and creating an environment that promotes a sense of openness and trust can positively contribute to compliance and potentially prolongs the patient’s life, given the circumstances. This can give the patient time to live their lives in a way that not only provides them quality of life, but to improve the quality of the lives to those around them. People tend to give more and exude more positivity to those nearby when they themselves feel good. To take care of one individual could have a ripple effect with potential kindness either spread from the healthcare worker to the rest of their patients and/or from the patient to their surroundings.



“ Care Starts with You. ”