

MODULE 3

Challenging Consultations

Paediatric



Disclosing errors. (Slide 83)

Background

Katie has been admitted to the hospital with a high temperature and dehydration. This morning the team have realised that Katie has been given the wrong dose of one of the prescribed medicines twice in the last 24 hours. The dose was twice as much as she should have received.

The medicine prescribed yesterday by the paediatrician from memory (not using the drugs formulary).

A blood test had been taken this morning (before the team knew about the medication error) looking at her kidney function. The main concern regarding the medication error would be harm to Katie's kidneys and there is no evidence of this on the blood test. Another blood test will be taken this evening. If this blood test is normal, it is very unlikely that Katie will suffer any long term harm.

Say something like

"Now let's look at a video of a paediatrician (and a paediatric nurse) disclosing an error. In this video clip the parents are actually actors. Watch the video clip and identify what skills the clinicians use."



Skills

In this interaction, the paediatrician uses good communication skills that help him manage this challenging consultation. He:

- Starts with a warm **greeting** – ‘Hello’... and shakes hands
- **Introduced** himself – ‘My name is John Fitzsimons’
- Clarified his **role**... ‘I am one of the paediatricians’
- The paediatric nurse also introduces herself and clarifies her role
- Asked the parents to take a seat
- **Body language:** sat down at eye level/warm facial expression/good eye-contact/nonverbals... calm tone of voice/slow pace
- **Establishing initial rapport:** says that he saw Katie earlier this morning... ‘she is looking much better, brighter and she is drinking a little now’
- **Warning shot:** ‘The reason I have asked you to meet us this morning is because we have something important to tell you’...
- **Small chunks:** ‘This morning we realised that one of the medicines that Katie has been getting over the last 24-hours... that she has gotten a dose that is almost twice as much as she should have received... /I wrote the medicine up... I should have used the drug formulary’...
- **Apologised:** ‘I am really sorry that has happened to Katie and to you’ (Doctor)./‘I am very sorry’ (Nurse)
- Used good **active listening** skills (head-nodding, leaning, eye-contact, pauses, silence)
- **No jargon...** ‘the injury has been done to your bladder and it has been repaired during the caesarean section’
- **Signposting...** ‘the main concern you would have is that... it would be really important that we did another blood test this evening’...
- **Demonstrating empathy...** ‘I can see that this is upsetting’...
- **Involving the patient:** ‘That’s a really good question...’
- **Closing the session (checking understanding):** ‘I’m sure after all the things we have said, you must have some questions’...