

Neutrality and Bias

While in some ways your interaction with patients will resemble a casual conversation, there are certain basic differences between the two forms of communication. In our everyday conversations, we tend to evaluate and judge the statements of the other person.

Patient: I was thinking of switching my diabetes medication from Diabinese to “Metformin.” What do you think?

The wrong answer!!

Community Coach: I think that is a great idea. I have been in Metformin for 2 years and it is working great for me.

When working with the patient, you must provide a neutral setting in which you do not express your own personal beliefs, and the respondent is encouraged to speak freely and fully.

Patient: I was thinking of switching my diabetes medications from Diabinese to “Metformin.” What do you think?

The right answer!!

Community Coach: It is great that you are playing an active role in your own care. This would be a great question to ask your doctor. Why don't we write down as a question you could ask your doctor.

Confidentiality

Another IMPORTANT part of being an effective Community Coach is confidentiality. If a patient is to speak freely or offer thoughtful, frank answer, he or she must be assured that all information will be treated as completely confidential. Efforts to protect the privacy of patients are made both in the central office and in the field. In the office, individual names are removed as the data are processed. Names are never associated with the data collected, and the data are made public in statistical form only. In the field, you are not allowed to discuss the patient with anyone who is not connected with the project. You also need to be careful to protect all documents. Be careful when discussing a patient. You never know who is standing around!