

Marshall University

Marshall Digital Scholar

Faculty Research Day

2019

Nov 15th, 10:50 AM

Patient Communication with Their General Practice Physicians: Does Age Matter?

William K. Willis

Marshall University, willis23@marshall.edu

Marcy Butler

Ashish Chandra

Follow this and additional works at: https://mds.marshall.edu/business_faculty_research_day



Part of the [Business Administration, Management, and Operations Commons](#), and the [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#)

Willis, William K.; Butler, Marcy; and Chandra, Ashish, "Patient Communication with Their General Practice Physicians: Does Age Matter?" (2019). *Faculty Research Day*. 11.

https://mds.marshall.edu/business_faculty_research_day/2019/Fall/11

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Lewis College of Business at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Research Day by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact zhangj@marshall.edu, beachgr@marshall.edu.



Patient Communication with their General Practice Physicians – Does Age Matter?

Willis, Butler, and Chandra



Physician Communication and its associated health care areas

- Communication between physician and patient (a two-way exchange) associates with multiple areas of health interactions. Literature review for this communication provides
- *treatment adherence (especially chronic disease)*
- *patient health outcomes (improved diabetes control)*
- *providing quality care*
- *cost reduction*
- *Communication is a tenet of the Patient-Centered Care Model (PCCM)*



Physician communication attributes

- ▶ physician's communication style or attitude towards the patient can influence the patient's trust and satisfaction
 - ▶ Studies indicate a need for better physician communication skills which is now incorporated into the curriculum of medical schools and during residency
 - ▶ Goal of HP2020, improve communication
- 



Methods/study aim

- ▶ Examine the difference in outcomes between various age groups and their communication with their GP
 - ▶ Only GP was the focus
 - ▶ Five question survey, Likert scale
 - ▶ Reliability of survey instrument--- Cronbach's alpha = .872
- 

Question 1	Your physician reviews and explains medical tests with you.
Question 2	Your physician makes sure you understand your health condition.
Question 3	Your physician makes sure you know what it is you need to do to help yourself.
Question 4	You feel included in any decisions made about your care.
Question 5	You are offered choices and options concerning the treatment of your condition.



Survey Instrument



Results

- ▶ n=247
- ▶ Six age groups
- ▶ Females = 160; males = 87
- ▶ Demographics:
 - ▶ Age group (6 groupings) (Table 2)
 - ▶ Insurance status
 - ▶ Length of time with GP
 - ▶ Number of visits annually to GP (Table 3)
 - ▶ Patient had to change physicians because of insurance change
 - ▶ Chi-squared analysis of these variables
 - ▶ T-test for comparing age group responses ($p= 0.05$)



Results



- ▶ Table 4 illustrates significant findings between age groups.
- ▶ Of interest:
 - ▶ Age group 5 shows significance with many of the other age group responses except for group 3
 - ▶ Question 4: “You feel included in any decisions made about your care,” demonstrated significance between more age groups than any of the other questions.
 - ▶ Question 5: “you are offered choices and options concerning the treatment of your condition,” was the only questions that did not illicit a significant response between any of the other age groups



Discussion



- ▶ Numerous studies focused on the patient-physician communication utilizing the *individual's* subjective opinion of:
 - ▶ Their physician's communication skills or
 - ▶ Focused on communication style of the physician or
 - ▶ Examined the physician's training concerning their communication skills



Discussion



- ▶ Our study examined the communication, but we looked at inter-relationships between age groups and each question by assessing the individual responses based on the patient's level of communication with their GP
- ▶ Findings did indicate several inter-relationship similarities between the age groups and specific questions
- ▶ Some of these inter-relationships were determined to be inconsistent with other studies of decision-making, which indicate that older individuals prefer a more paternalistic approach, where the physician makes the decisions.
- ▶ Baby boomers are of the older age groups and they may seek more engagement with their physician



Discussion



- ▶ Similarities found between the younger and older age cohort's responses to the questions
- ▶ Health literacy was an area that needs to be explored
- ▶ Technology savvy individuals within age groups. Further examination is needed



Strategies for improvements

- ▶ *Strategy 6G: Training to Advance Physician Communication Skills*, developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).
 - ▶ Workshops, seminars, webinars, videos
 - ▶ Improving email/text messaging skills
 - ▶ Effective writing enhancement
- 



Limitations



- ▶ Paucity of the number of participants in some age groups
- ▶ Examination of health behaviors/traits of specific age groups
- ▶ Role of female/male in the communication process
- ▶ Broaden the scope from GP to other delivery personnel for health care, PA or nurse practitioner
- ▶ Cultural differences/competency issues