

We brought together young people, their parents, doctors, and nurses to talk about the conversations they have together.

It's your consultation. BE HEARD

At the workshops, we learned that if doctors and nurses communicate a few simple things at the beginning, middle and end of the consultation, everyone gets a lot more out of the conversation.

First, the clinician should explain the consultation process:

Explain the process before you start.

"This is how I work out what's going on..."

"First, the young person will talk, uninterrupted..."

"Second, the parent will add their contribution..."

"Third, I'll speak to the young person alone..."

"Having listened to everyone, I will then explain what is going on to both of you."

Second, the clinician should relate the diagnosis to symptoms the young person is experiencing:

The clinician should find out what's going on in the young person's life. Conversations that focus on the young person's life are more effective than conversations that focus on the disease.

"What do you think is contributing to your condition?"

Make the diagnosis personal to relate to their life.

"X (symptoms) leads me to believe you have Y condition."

For example: "Because you're breathless playing football and your mother hears you coughing at night, it leads me to believe you have..."

Find out what effect the illness is having on the young person's life, e.g. school, mood, sleep, relationships with peers.

(continued on other side...)

"There are some questions I wanted to ask but I didn't."



STUDENT

"Sometimes we just need to be bolder and talk about the stuff going around in our head."

"I was just quietly nodding my head to the doctor, but actually I had so many thoughts in my head."



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Third, the clinician should involve the young person in planning 'what happens next':

Telling a young person what to do rarely changes their behaviour.

Let the young person set the goals: "What would 'being well' mean to you?"

Involve them in the problem solving.

"How can we work together to achieve this?" and...

"What do we do if this doesn't work out?"

Help young people tap into their resourcefulness.

"If my parent is there, the doctor talks to them and not to me."



"The doctors tend to address all their questions to me. Maybe it would be better if they shoved me out the door?"



"In order to get everyone's story, ideally I like to see the young person and their parent together, and then see the young person on their own."



About the Better Conversations project

TalkLab's Better Conversations is a collaborative project aimed at improving the sometimes complex, three-way conversations between doctors, young people, and their parents. A series of workshops was held to explore what's working, what isn't and why – as well as all of those things that go unsaid.

We brought together young people, their parents, paediatricians, and specialist nurses, so that everyone could be heard.

These voices were condensed into three brief films on the website and one concise written list of tips and recommendations, also known as "The Take Away." This section summarises the key points to include in your next consultation, as well as some simple experiments everyone can try based on what paediatricians have told us transformed their practice.

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If you'd like more information or would like to participate in one of the TalkLab's workshops, please visit our website at:

www.talklab.nhs.uk