

# "I Don't Understand"

## Setting communication standards in Ultrasound



### Background

Effective communication is essential in all aspects of healthcare. Ensuring that patients understand the process of their appointment, and what will occur, has a positive impact on the efficiency of the appointment; the quality of the scan; the experience of the patient and is critical to informed consent.

There are three basic forms of communication: Verbal, Written and body language.

### Purpose

This project was instigated because of an analysis of all ultrasound related complaints over a 12-month period. It was discovered that 58% of complaints were communication related.

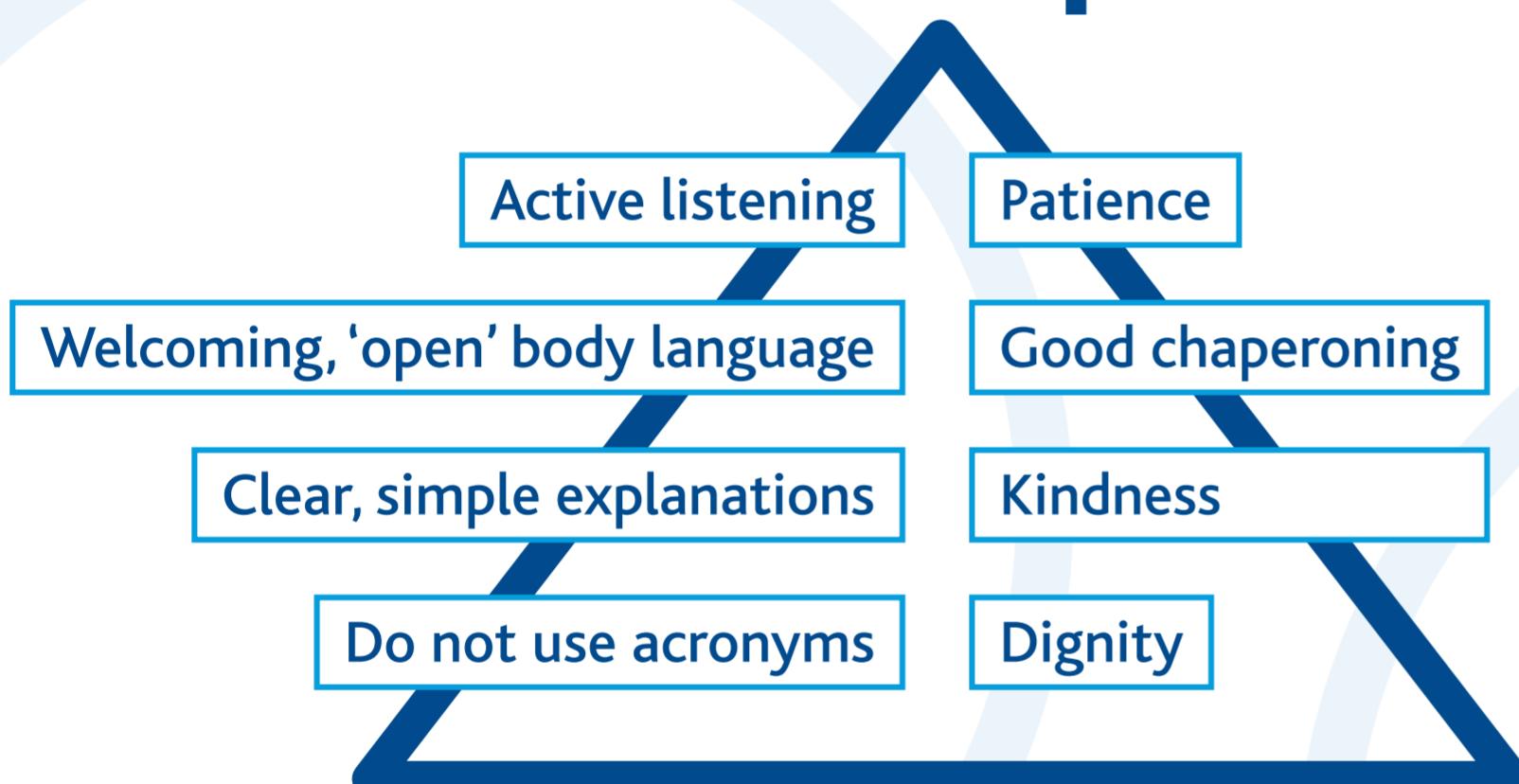
A project was begun to improve the communication skills of all clinical staff involved in the ultrasound service. This was accomplished with a series of practical workshops and reflective practise.

### Summary of Content

This poster looks at the different ways that we all communicate with our patients, to raise awareness and perception of communication and how to improve those skills.

Also, to think about our responses to patients and to reflect on how patients perceive us. Additionally, to assess look how complaints may occur and also to think about informed consent.

## How do we improve communication?



### Source of complaints

Communication	38
Staff related	34
Patient pathway	30
Clinical treatment	12
Reports/results	10
Facilities/environment	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>125</b>

Source: InHealth Complaints, Ultrasound Jan 18 – Feb 19

Think  
about  
the  
patient

### Patient worries

- Diagnosis
- Finding the clinic
- Being on time
- Pre-scan prep
- Getting undressed
- Communication/language barrier
- Disabilities

### Staff worries

- Running clinic on time
- Equipment failure
- Non-prepped patients
- Complicated pathology
- Work-related injury
- Responding to queries
- Worrying about errors

VS

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I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.  
Maya Angelou

### Communication improved

- ✓ Patient satisfaction
- ✓ Dignity
- ✓ Fully informed consent
- ✓ Relationship with referrers
- ✓ Reporting quality

### References

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3. Teresa L.Thompson, Jeffrey D.Robinson, and Dale E. Brashers (1994) "Interpersonal Communication and Health Care" Journal of nursing management - Wiley Online Library