

Patients' Rude Behaviour Linked to Poor Care



Rude behaviour of patients and their relatives can have negative effects on the performance of medical teams resulting in poor care, according to a study by University of Florida researchers. While much has been written about the need to put an end to some doctors' rude and bullying behaviour, the new study shows the need for patients and families to also control their behaviour.

See Also: [Rudeness Damages Medical Staff Performance](#)

Emotions can run high in hospitals, so it's not uncommon for patients or their loved ones to be rude to medical professionals if they think care is inadequate. However, that type of bad behaviour can lead to worse care for a child, the researchers warn. Berating a child's doctors or other medical staff who provide care has "devastating effects on medical performance," according to the study published in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Data show that more than 250,000 deaths are attributed to medical errors in the U.S. each year. The effects of rudeness account for more than 40 percent of the variance in practitioner performance that can lead to medical errors, according to management professor Amir Erez, PhD, one of the study authors.

"People may think that doctors should just 'get over' the insult and continue doing their job. However, the study shows that even if doctors have the best intentions in mind, as they usually do, they cannot get over rudeness because it interferes with their cognitive functioning without an ability to control it," the author explains.

In the study, Prof. Erez and colleagues compared teams made up of two doctors and two nurses in 39 neonatal intensive care units in Israel. The researchers simulated five scenarios in which the teams treated infant medical mannequins in emergency situations. An actress playing the baby's mother scolded some of the teams, while the others were not subjected to rude behaviour.

The investigators found that teams who experienced rudeness performed poorly and were deficient in all of the study's 11 measures, including diagnostic accuracy, information sharing, therapy plan and communication. The behaviour continued to affect the team members the entire day. In contrast, teams that participated in a pretest intervention — a computer game intended to raise the threshold of sensitivity to anger and aggression — recognised the mother's rudeness and were not affected by it.

The authors suggest that medical professionals undergo training for improving their interpersonal skills. They also say that hospital administrators should make it a priority to teach medical staff how to handle rudeness more effectively.

Source: [FierceHealthcare](#)

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