

[Free pdf] Vital Conversations: Improving Communication Between Doctors and Patients

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Dennis Rosen MD

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Dennis Rosen MD : Vital Conversations: Improving Communication Between Doctors and Patients before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Vital Conversations: Improving Communication Between Doctors and Patients:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Vital Conversations has the potential for having a profound positive effectBy LewisThe U.S. health care system is the most costly in the world, comprising about 18% of GDP, and yet

health outcomes, measured by such statistics as infant mortality and life expectancy, are less favorable than in many other countries. In *Vital Conversations*, Dr. Rosen has written an important book, one might say a vitally important book, about physician- patient communication. The book contains many practical suggestions for physicians and patients. The widespread adoption of these suggestions would produce two worthy results improved patient health outcomes and reduced health care costs. As a practicing physician for nearly two decades, Dr. Rosen has identified from personal experience numerous negative consequences of inadequate physician-patient communication. For example, patients often don't understand the importance of taking their medications as directed and as a result don't feel better, requiring additional treatment. Another example: Patients being discharged from hospital are often not clear about new medications and continuing treatment at home, about lifestyle changes that may be needed (say, after a heart attack), and about signs that should prompt the patient to seek immediate medical attention. And, they often don't set an early appointment with their family doctor to follow up on their hospitalization. The result often is re-admission to hospital within 30 days of discharge, where many such re-admissions were preventable. Dr. Rosen makes many of his points by citing personal experiences, often quite riveting, from his practice. He urges doctors to be sensitive to emotional and cultural factors in the lives of their patients. A frequent complaint of both physicians and patients is that doctors spend too little time with each patient. This occurs because many health organization administrators, in the interest of controlling costs, put pressure on doctors to see more and more patients per day. One unintended result is that physicians spend less time on patient histories and prescribe expensive tests that might otherwise have been unnecessary had they taken more time with the patient. So, costs go up instead of down. There is also a generalized sense of being in a hurry, which adversely affects the quality of the communication taking place and leaves many doctors and patients unsatisfied. A major challenge for the health care system is to modify incentives so that there is improved physician-patient communication, particular where the benefits are experienced elsewhere in the system. For example, family doctors who spend more time on preventative medical care may reduce the number of hospital admissions as a result. Doing so may not produce any financial gain for the family doctor but does improve patient health outcomes and reduces overall health care costs. This book should be studied by health economists, those responsible for health care policy and implementation, and those responsible for medical education. Many individual physicians can improve their own practice by adopting some of the many suggestions provided. And there are valuable tips for patients, such as preparing lists of questions before their visits, and bringing a family member or friend along on such a visit. Overall, *Vital Conversations* has the potential for having a large and positive impact on the practice of medicine.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Engaging and illuminating
By Jonathan Rosen
An excellent book that explores in an accessible and engaging way the importance of good communication between doctors and patients. The book cogently and persuasively explains why good communication is beneficial not only for the patients and their families, resulting in better medical outcomes for myriad reasons, but also how this could be a crucial component to healing the overtaxed healthcare system. Dr. Rosen couches his arguments with data and studies, creating a book that every healthcare professional will find illuminating and useful, while also remaining a compelling read for non-professionals who, to one degree or another, have to engage with doctors and the larger medical establishment (which is all of us, at one point or another!). You should definitely buy this book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I absolutely loved reading it
By Customer
An eye opener. I absolutely loved reading it. Rosen tells stories very well, and supports his argument through strategic use of numbers.

The health-care system in the United States is by far the most expensive in the world, yet its outcomes are decidedly mediocre in comparison with those of other countries. Poor communication between doctors and patients, Dennis Rosen argues, is at the heart of this disparity, a pervasive problem that damages the well-being of the patient and the integrity of the health-care system and society. Drawing upon research in biomedicine, sociology, and anthropology and integrating personal stories from his medical practice in three different countries (and as a patient), Rosen shows how important good communication between physicians and patients is to high-quality and less-expensive care. Without it, treatment adherence and preventive services decline, and the rates of medical complications, hospital readmissions, and unnecessary testing and procedures rise. Rosen illustrates the consequences of these problems from both the caregiver and patient perspectives and explores the socioeconomic and cultural factors that cause important information to be literally lost in translation. He concludes with a prescriptive chapter aimed at building the cultural competencies and communication skills necessary for higher-quality, less-expensive care, making it more satisfying for all involved.

I applaud Dennis Rosen, MD, for bringing attention to an important aspect of medicine in our modern world. Thorough and robust, his stories are engaging, true gems of health literacy and the appreciation of cultural influences. These and other aspects make *Vital Conversations* an excellent source of ideas on how to enhance treatment. (Joseph Shrand, MD, Harvard Medical School, author of *Outsmarting Anger: 7 Strategies for Defusing our Most Dangerous Emotion*) At a time when there has been marked degradation of physician-patient communication, Dennis Rosen, MD, takes us back to the basics: the need for ways to foster an exquisite and intimate connection. He clearly understands

what doctors should do to raise the bar, and it is fully captured in *Vital Conversations*. (Eric J. Topol, MD, Scripps Research Institute, author of *The Creative Destruction of Medicine: How the Digital Revolution Will Create Better Health Care*) Timely.... Full of personal anecdotes, selected research in biomedicine, sociology and anthropology and lots of footnotes (but reader friendly), Rosen's book should be read by physicians and students of medicine and nursing, as well as laymen interested in our medical system. (Judy Siegel-Itzkovich *The Jerusalem Post*) Provides moving examples of actual patient scenarios.... [that] establish Rosen as a caring and empathetic physician with a wealth of experience to share. (Amy Forman *Massachusetts Jewish Journal*) As a final-year medical student, I can't help but wonder if my communication skills are at their peak. I have an abundance of time to spend with my patients, no financial targets to meet, and I receive regular training and feedback on this very aspect of my work. I will keep Rosen's excellent book with me next year as a reminder not to let communication lose its place as the diagnostic tools become too many to fit in my box. Jina Pakpoor, *The Lancet*

Dennis Rosen, MD, argues that physicians can heal the health care system by taking the time, and by making the effort, to understand patients' needs before prescribing treatment. His argument, along with advice on how to achieve this understanding through physician-patient communication, is useful to all participants in the health care system (patients, physicians and other health care providers, public policy and opinion makers, and third-party payers and providers). David Caldwell, PhD: *Journal of the American Medical Writers Association*

About the Author: Dennis Rosen, MD, is a pediatric pulmonologist and sleep specialist at Boston Children's Hospital and assistant professor of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. He writes regularly for the medical press as well as for the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and *Pacific Standard*. He is also the author of *Successful Sleep Strategies for Kids* (a Harvard Medical School Guide).