TAKE 5
PATIENT CENTERED EHR USE DURING A CLINICAL ENCOUNTER
A practical strategy for keeping a personal connection while working with a patient’s electronic health record

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

1 REVIEW THE PATIENT’S CHART BEFORE THE VISIT
- Start by scanning the last physician note and review recent lab tests or images.
- Review any recent lab tests or images.
- You may find clues about what care the patient will likely need. You can prepare orders in the EMR in advance and submit them once the patient agrees.

2 SET THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS
- Engage with the patient while logging into the EMR system by asking an open-ended personal question such as, “Tell me something about yourself.”
- Ask the patient to list what outcomes they would like from the visit.

3 ACTIVELY LISTEN TO YOUR PATIENT
- Give the patient your full attention at the beginning of the visit.
- While glimpses at the computer screen are natural, in general try to keep your gaze upon the patient.

4 TAKE TIMELY ACTION
- Use the screen as a visual aid when educating the patient about their condition.
- Use the EMR to attach any education to their after-visit summary.

5 REFLECT ON THE PATIENT ENCOUNTER
- After the visit, think about how you could improve your communication to the patient. Also reflect on what went well.
- Think about how you could better prepare yourself for the next patient visit.

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