



COMMUNICATION

COVID EMERGENCY



Basic tips for managing communication with families and patients who are deteriorating, aimed at helping colleagues heavily occupied with the emergency

In the case of a

CONSCIOUS PATIENT

Tips for communicating
with the **PATIENT**

With the patient

**Avoid sentences
such as**



“There is nothing more we can do for you.”

*“Don’t worry, you’ll die quietly and peacefully
with these drugs.”*

“These drugs will let you die without suffering.”

“You must be strong/brave for your family.”

*“You’ll see, our treatment will stop you being
anxious or scared.”*

With the patient

**RECOMMENDED
expressions**



*“Good morning Mr/Mrs/Ms
(address the person by name),
I am Doctor... (introduce yourself by name)*

*...we’re doing our best to look after you and
take care of you...”*

*“I understand that this is an emotional time,
anyone would be scared/anxious (repeat the
term used by the person)...
...it is normal to be worried and scared.”*

*“We are doing our best to help you and
make sure you don’t suffer.”*

*“I am very sorry that you cannot have your
loved ones around you, but as you can see,
you are here with us, you are not alone, we
will stay with you.”*

*“Even though your family cannot stay in the
ward, they are very close. They call every
day to find out how you are, and we make
sure we talk to them regularly.”*

In the case of a
CONSCIOUS OR UNCONSCIOUS PATIENT

Tips for communicating
with the **FAMILY**

When on the phone
to the **family**
**Avoid sentences
such as**



DO NOT introduce yourself in an
impersonal way:

“Good evening, I’m the doctor on duty.”

Never refer to the patient by saying:

“A patient in this pathological stage...”

DO NOT say that the patient is worse in a
way that is too direct or blunt by using
sentences such as:

***“There is nothing more we can do for
your father/mother/etc.”***

***“Don’t worry, your father/mother/etc.
will die peacefully with these drugs.”***

***“These drugs will let him or her die
without suffering.”***

When on the phone
to the **family**
**RECOMMENDED
expressions**



Introduce yourself by your full name and role:

***“I’m so sorry that due to this awful
situation we cannot meet in person to talk
about your father/mother/wife/etc.”***

Try to provide information gradually, if possible, using
simple language:

***“We understand your
anxiety/fear/desperation... it is perfectly
reasonable.”***

Provide information gradually:

***“We have done everything in our power
for you/your father/mother/brother/sister
at this very difficult time...”***

***“...Unfortunately, medicine has its limits
and now with Mr/Mrs/Ms (name the
patient) we have reached that limit.”***

***“...his/her condition is deteriorating...
We are so sorry.***

***At the moment we are doing our best to
prevent any suffering...”***

***“...he/she will be settled and won’t feel
any pain...”***

***“...he/she will be settled at the end and
won’t feel any pain in the final moments of
his/her life...”***