

Blogs as Medical Communication Resources by
Anna Lank, C3NY

Hello ASPE Members,

As educational blogs are growing in our industry, I wanted to share with you the work we have done at C3NY to create a blog as an adjunct to our website, www.c3ny.org/blog/.

I created the blog to emphasize points that we present to our students in a workshop that we offer monthly in order to clarify, elaborate on and to introduce readers who perhaps have not been exposed to this type of learning to the idea of good, clear communication skills, with an emphasis on skills evaluated on the USMLE Step 2 CS examination (mostly the ICE and CIS portions).

C3NY, the Clinical Competence Center of New York, is an independent service organization, working with several tri-state Medical Schools, creating SP curriculum and events. We work with SUNY Downstate College of Medicine in Brooklyn, Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, and the New York College of Podiatric Medicine. We do a variety of projects and assessments, throughout all four years of medical school, with residents and fellows, both formative and summative.

In addition, C3NY offers the monthly workshop (mentioned above) in New York City to prepare candidates taking the USMLE Step 2 CS exam. Most of our students are IMG's (international medical graduates) but we work with American medical students as well; the workshop is open to all. Our students are usually first time test-takers or candidates who have taken the exam and not been successful. Dr. Mark H. Swartz, who is a pioneer in the field of SP methodology, conducts the workshop, and oversees all of the SP projects produced by C3NY.

More about Dr. Swartz can be found at <http://c3ny.org/faculty/> . He is the author of *Textbook of Physical Diagnosis: History and Examination* which is a widely read textbook in the field, and has been translated to 14 languages. Dr. Swartz founded C3NY over 13 years ago, after establishing the Morchand Center for Clinical Competence at Mount Sinai.

In the process of building our blog, I have discovered some wonderful online resources, and have used the following blogs as springboards for my posts:

<http://healthcommunications.wordpress.com/> <http://more-distractable.org/#about> <http://medicaleconomics.modernmedicine.com/>
<http://www.kevinmd.com/blog/>
<http://www.communicatingwithpatients.com/index.html>

And there are many more links posted on the blog for all to explore including some great TED talks, TEDMED information and articles from the Wall Street Journal.

Anything and everything we, as SP educators, can do to get the word out about how to approach doctor patient encounters with a patient-centered approach is the goal of the blog. I try to be succinct in each posting; picking a specific topic to explore such as active listening, patient-centered interviewing, time management, etc.

I am just getting started in this venture but find that by writing the posts I clarify my own thinking about how best to teach these skills. In this way, hopefully, we can help medical students and international doctors who come through our program realize that the doctor patient partnership in the USA is not just something required on the USMLE Step 2 CS exam, but is a foundational “best practice” that will yield thriving medical relationships, careers and ultimately nurture better care for patients.