

Provides follow up/safety net

Green – Shares a safe and SMART safety netting plan with the patient, together with timely follow up

Red – Does not produce any safety netting or follow up plan, or produces a plan that is inappropriate, dangerous or vague

About this task

Safety netting and follow up are important for patient safety and concordance. Bad or no safety netting/follow up can be dangerous for the patient or cause inappropriate anxiety. So, the trainee needs to be able to:

- Develop a safety net for the patient that is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)
- Offer appropriate follow up to the patient, which is dependent on the nature of the condition

Audio consultations

It is even more vital to ensure that the patient understands the follow-up and safety net plan. It is therefore important to offer information in additional forms, such as a text message, or a link to an appropriate internet site. There is also a greater need to *formally* check that the patient has understood the information you have presented to them, as you will not be able to check as easily as a face-to-face consultation.

Educational Activities

Activity 1: Review a series of consultations to see how often you actually discuss safety netting and follow up with the patient? In the cases where you do discuss safety netting/follow up, would this allow the patient to come back for review at the appropriate time (not too late, not too early)

Activity 2: Use your patients! Ask them if they feel confident about the follow up and safety netting plans you discuss with them? Get them to repeat to you when they would come back - have they understood your explanation? If not, do this again and again check back with the patient.

Activity 3: Continue practising these skills - continue to ask your patients about their confidence in, and understanding of, your suggestions.

Activity 4: Follow up in a GP setting must be appropriate to the condition and adapted to the patient's situation and context. Discuss with your trainer different kinds of follow up such as telephone or face to face review. How important is the timing of the follow up? Watch or listen to your trainer and write down how he/she manages follow up.

Audio consultation

Listen to four or five of your audio consultations, focussing just on the part of the consultation where you talk to the patient about follow-up and safety-netting. How sure are you that the patient understands and will follow

the agreed plan? In how many of the consultations do you check that the patient has understood the plan? What could you do differently?

Reflective Exercises

Exercise 1: What do you think is the purpose of a good follow up and safety netting plan? Are there some consultations where it is more important, even crucial to offer follow up and safety netting? Discuss your reflection with your trainer to gain more insight.

Related interpersonal skills

Practicing and developing the following interpersonal skills will allow the task of '*Provides follow up/safety net*' to be achieved more effectively:

- Shares and uses ICE in plan
- Negotiates and uses psycho-social information in plan
- Supports in decision making

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