Papers That Have Changed My Practice

More than one source of enlightenment

PAPER AASH

The communication that has had the most effect on my day to day practice via a classic reference of FJ Mollan in the BMJ in 1983. This paper had no references and was delivered by a young GP approximately 10 years ago. The paper was entitled, 'The troubled patient - the basis of good GP-patient relationships'.

The presentation, and consequently the conclusion, can be summed up by the consensus reached by the authors that: "The information presented in this paper is the basis of effective practice in the primary care setting. All practitioners should be aware of the following issues and the implications for practice that they raise:

1. The troubled patient is a complex problem that requires careful and sensitive management.
2. The patient's feelings of being troubled may be a reflection of their need for support and understanding.
3. The practitioner's role is to provide a safe and confidential environment for the patient to express their concerns and to receive appropriate advice and referral if necessary.

The authors argued that the troubled patient presents a significant challenge to primary care practitioners and that the development of effective communication skills is essential for the management of such cases. They concluded by emphasizing the importance of a supportive and empathetic approach to the troubled patient, which is based on an understanding of the patient's needs and the provision of appropriate care and support.

To my knowledge, this paper was the first to acknowledge the importance of the troubled patient and to highlight the role of the practitioner in managing these cases. It has had a profound impact on my practice and has influenced my approach to the management of troubled patients. The paper's emphasis on the importance of a supportive and understanding approach to the troubled patient has been a cornerstone of my practice.

References