Patient Education

Resident as Patient Educator

As you progress in your TIPS course, one teaching area we would encourage you to develop involves your role as a patient educator. The following are some tips and strategies you may find useful when having these conversations with patients.

What is patient education?

- Patient education encompasses - health promotion, prevention, disease specific information, tools, communication and guidelines and

- Includes **more than the transfer of information**; patient education facilitates behaviour change and encourages self-management**.**

<div align="right">Task Force on Patient Education CFPC 2008</div>

Patient Education fits well with the CanMEDS roles such as communicator, collaborator, scholar, and professional. You can explore specific patient education skills documented in the roles at http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/canmeds/canmeds-framework-e.

What opportunities exist to provide patient education?

- Teachable moments during a clinic visit, ER visit or hospitalization or follow up
- Following any assessment and especially when engaged in shared decision making / finding common ground
- During a physical exam
- When the patient or family has information from a website
- With any new diagnosis
- When prescribing a new medication
- Health promotion / prevention opportunities; when discussing risk
- For Chronic Disease Management

Why should physicians apply effective patient education in their day to day work?

- We are credible sources of information.
- We have opportunities to assess patient understanding and address gaps.
- We have access to team members and supports to reinforce learning.
- Applying effective strategies can result in better shared decision making.
- Adherence to medications can improve. For example, think about poor asthma or COPD control when patients don't know how to properly use their inhalers.

There are several resources that can help you evaluate written materials and tools such as the DISCERN Instrument at http://www.discern.org.uk/discern_instrument.php or using