Lesson Plan Four: Good Doctors and Good Patients

Overview
Students will discuss the qualities of their favorite doctors and identify what traits are shared by “good doctors.” They will also discuss what makes a “good patient.” Students will learn what it means to take a medical history and will role play taking a history. They will discuss what made their ability to take the complete history easy or difficult. Additional activities include sharing and assigning articles for next time, Inspiring Stories, and journal writing.

Outcomes
- Students will identify and be able to discuss the skills and qualities of “good” doctors
- Students will be familiar with patient histories
- Students will understand the importance of communication in the doctor-patient relationship

Materials
- Skit scripts
- Patient profile cards
- Doctor history form [Note: this a short, student-friendly example for use in the role play activity only]
- Writing utensils

Discussion
- What kind of experiences have you had with a health care professional—such as a doctor, a nurse, or dentist?
- Do you have a favorite doctor you usually go to? Why do you like this person? Write down these qualities on a sheet or a board.
  - Examples: Does the doctor remember you from visit to visit? Is she/he friendly and put you at ease? Do they listen to you and take their time with you?
- What makes a good patient?
  - Examples: A person who clearly and fully explains all symptoms to the doctor. A person who is truthful about what’s wrong, or what may have occurred to make them ill.
- Are some of these good traits that a doctor or a patient should have more important than others? Why or why not?
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Activity:

Part 1: Skit
Facilitator: Perform the two skits with a fellow facilitator or choose students to perform who will be comfortable acting in front of the class. After both skits are performed, ask the following questions:

- What was the doctor doing right or wrong in the first skit?
- What was the patient doing right or wrong in the second skit?
- How could both the doctor and the patient have acted more appropriately?

Part 2: Role Play
In pairs, students will role play the doctor/patient conversation that doctors call “taking a history.” This is when the doctor, nurse, or medical student asks the patient basic questions to help identify what is wrong. Often times, a student will need to “present” the history either to a doctor who is supervising him or her, or to a group of doctors, in order to discuss the situation and possible treatments or medication to prescribe.

One partner will be the patient first, and take a patient profile card (do not show your partner your card). The other student will be the doctor first and, using the history form, will interview the patient. Once the interview is complete and the doctor has guessed the illness, switch roles so that the doctor is now the patient with a new patient card, and the patient is now the doctor.

Additional Resources
Sample medical history form:
http://shipsked.ucsd.edu/General_Info/Forms/mhq-1.pdf

Sample medical history video:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxEO2JnSJU

Wrap Up
Come back together as a class. Ask students to share what was easy and what was hard about taking patient histories as the doctor and the patient. Collect name badges from students.
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Additional Activities

• **Students share article with the group**
  Assign students to bring in an article to share with the group. Have the student tell why they chose the article. Ask the group for their thoughts about the topic.

• **Inspiring Story of the week**
  Marciana Laster: https://www.aamc.org/students/aspiring/inspiring-stories/280748/marciana-laster.html

• **Journal writing**
  Have the students write about what skills or traits they have or would like to develop to help them become great doctors. Why are those skills or traits important? How are they going to continue to develop them?

• **Article to share with group next time**
  Assign one or two students to find an interesting article having to do with medicine or being a physician. Have the students share what they’ve read and facilitate a short discussion with the group about the article or topic.