Pharmacy students’ self-reflection of experiences with simulated patients leads to improved responses to patients

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In 2006, a 6-year course, involving a 5-month internship in a pharmacy and hospital, became mandatory for pharmaceutical students in Japan, in order mainly to nurture their practical skills required in clinical settings. It is also essential to develop communication skills to provide patients with pharmaceutical care, and, hence, some universities are employing educational communication using simulated patients (SP) to nurture students’ attitude and skills before participating in clinical practice. Meijo University provides a program in which students experience role-playing with SP in imaginary medical settings. According to our survey, 94.9% of the university’s pharmacy students answered that such an experience is useful to learn responses to patients, and 94.3% answered that feedback from SP is useful to improve their communication skills. In this study, we provided education in which students reflected on themselves in a 3-step manner: 1) their responses to patients were videotaped, 2) students watched their responses on videotapes, and 3) made transcripts. The study participants could reflect on their behaviors more deeply by watching the videos repeatedly and visualizing the content of their conversation with SP. In clinical practice, students are required to reflect on their responses to patients. It was suggested that the above-mentioned 3-step self-reflection may lead to changes in students’ future attitude and behaviors in medical settings.

Biography

Manako Hanya completed her PhD at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Meijo University in 2009. She did Postdoctoral studies at Robert Gordon University, School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences in the UK. Currently, she is now affiliated with Meijo University as an Assistant Professor. She has published more than 10 papers on health-care communication. Her research work focuses on health-care communication and developing programs for Inter-professional Education (IPE). She is also an Editorial Board Member of the Japanese Pharmaceutical Communication Association.

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