

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress on

# Primary Healthcare, Nursing and Neonatal Screening

&

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# Women's Health, Obstetrics and Female Reproductive System

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## Quality care: Communication skills work if we use them

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There is ample evidence that health professionals do not always communicate as well as they should. Nursing is not alone; this can be said about most health professionals having direct encounters with patients and their families. Noted scholars and professional organizations emphasized that communication skills are critical to providing patient- and family-centered care and warn that health professionals lack adequate training and education in using communication skills to provide high-quality patient-centered care. The deficit in communication skill training is important across the board, but particularly in health promotion and chronic illness, two concerns driving the direction of healthcare worldwide. Quality communications promote high-quality patient-centered care, accurate identification of patients' problems, health care utilization, adherence to treatment, shared decision-making, and satisfaction with care. Core competencies include active listening, empathy and compassion, and appropriate use of questions. There is some evidence that lower work stress is associated with strong communication skills. In any case, the greater part of specialists doesn't feel sure about their relational abilities or maybe have had no formal preparing by any means. If their skills were improved, it follows that quality of care could improve, and costs of this care might be reduced. Educational preparation is foundational, but supportive work environments are also extremely important. This presentation will focus on the role of communication skills in primary care practice and evidence to support the link between communication skills, quality care outcomes, and patient satisfaction. Samples of dialogue will be offered to illustrate points made. The role of informational technology in shaping healthcare communications, good and bad, will be highlighted.

### Biography

Professor van Servellen is a noted author, consultant, and educator. Her book: *Communication Skills for the Health Professional: Context, Concepts, Practice, and Evidence* is in its 3rd edition and will be available September 2018. She completed her BS and MS in Nursing at the University of California, San Francisco and her PhD from Stanford University, Palo Alto, California. She has published extensively on issues of quality care, treatment adherence, and patient satisfaction and obtained research funding on these topics. She is a reviewer for several journals including those in Nursing, Psychology, Public Health, and Social Science in Medicine. She is an editorial board member for *Nursing and Health Sciences*. After retiring from UCLA (2007) she held positions in research and administration at three additional major universities. Her passion about communications and quality care are quite obvious from her widely read publications and invitations to consult in the US and abroad.

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