

<b>TITLE OF THE COURSE: Communication in Healthcare</b> <b>Code....(full-time) / Code....(part-time)</b>					
<b>TITLE OF THE COURSE IN HUNGARIAN: Egészségkommunikáció</b>					
<b>Responsible unit (institute/department):</b> Institute of Health Sciences	<b>Number of lessons per week/semester:</b> Full-time: 2 Part-time:	<b>Credit value:</b> 6 ECTS		<b>Prerequisites:</b> None	<b>Prerequisite for exam:</b> Active participation and completion of project work
<b>Lecturer in charge of the subject:</b> Viktória Anna Kovacs, MD PhD	<b>Type of course:</b> compulsory/ compulsory elective/ <u>elective</u> / criterion	<b>Recommended semester:</b> -	<b>Semester in which the course is offered:</b> Spring	<b>Language of instruction:</b> Hungarian/ <u>English</u> / German/ ...	<b>Type of evaluation:</b> exam (colloquium)/ <u>term mark</u> / basic exam/ comprehensive exam/report/ signature/graded signature
<b>Lecturer(s):</b> Dr. Nóra Tamásné Bese, lecturer Éva Kertész, lecturer					<b>Method of evaluation:</b> <u>written</u> / oral/ oral and written
<b>Description of professional content and purpose of the course:</b>					
The course introduces students to the principles, methods, and challenges of communication in healthcare. Effective communication between healthcare professionals, patients, and communities is a cornerstone of high-quality care and patient safety. The aim is to develop interpersonal, intercultural, and digital communication skills essential for health professionals, and to enhance understanding of empathy, trust-building, and patient empowerment. Students will explore both the theory and practice of communication through discussions, simulations, and case studies.					
<b>Short outline, description of acquired knowledge, skills and competences:</b>					
During the semester, students acquire both theoretical foundations and practical communication skills that are essential for effective, ethical, and empathetic healthcare practice. The course combines short lectures, discussions, and simulation-based exercises. The topics are organised to correspond with the 15 contact hours – roughly 2 hours per topic (part-time).					
<b>Theoretical and practical knowledge covered:</b>					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Fundamentals of health communication</b> – models, key concepts, and the importance of communication in healthcare systems.</li> <li>2. <b>The role of communication in patient care and public health</b> – how communication influences diagnosis, adherence, and health promotion.</li> <li>3. <b>Verbal and non-verbal communication tools</b> – effective listening, questioning, and body language in clinical encounters.</li> <li>4. <b>Communication with children, older adults, and vulnerable patients</b> – adapting approaches to individual needs and capacities.</li> <li>5. <b>Cultural and social sensitivity in healthcare interactions</b> – overcoming bias, language, and cultural barriers.</li> <li>6. <b>Crisis and conflict communication</b> – managing emotions, aggression, and high-stress situations in clinical practice.</li> <li>7. <b>Digital and media communication in health promotion</b> – using online channels and social media responsibly to share health information.</li> <li>8. <b>Communication for therapeutic adherence and patient safety</b> – shared decision-making, patient empowerment, and trust-building.</li> </ol>					
<b>Student group project</b> – development and presentation of a communication product (poster, video, or campaign concept) demonstrating practical application of learned skills.					
<b>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply effective, empathetic, and ethical communication techniques in healthcare contexts.</li> <li>• Adapt communication strategies to diverse patient groups, needs and situations.</li> <li>• Demonstrate teamwork, constructive feedback, and reflective practice.</li> </ul>					

- Show sensitivity to diversity, patient rights, and confidentiality in both in-person and digital settings.

**Requirements during the semester and teaching methods:**

Requirements during the semester:

- Active class participation and role-play exercises
- Group project and presentation
- Short reflection essay on a communication case
- Attendance (minimum 80%) required

Teaching methods: interactive lectures, group work, simulation, video analysis, and guided discussions.

**Compulsory sources/reading, bibliography, available sources for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences:**

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health – Center for Communication Programs. (2018). *A Field Guide to Designing a Health Communication Strategy*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.

[Full text PDF](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2022). *Health Communication Playbook*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

[Full text PDF](#)

**Recommended additional sources/reading:**

Vermeir, P., Vandijck, D., Degroote, S., Peleman, R., Verhaeghe, R., Mortier, E., Hallaert, G., Van Daele, S., Buylaert, W., & Vogelaers, D. (2015). *Communication in healthcare: A narrative review of the literature and practical recommendations*. *International Journal of Clinical Practice*, 69(11), 1257–1267. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcp.12686>

[Full text via PubMed Central](#)

Sharkiya, S. H., Veisani, Y., Delpisheh, A., & Khazaei, S. (2023). *Quality communication can improve patient-centred health outcomes among older patients: A rapid review*. *BMC Health Services Research*, 23(1), 983.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-023-09869-8>

[Full text](#)

European Journal of Health Communication (EJHC). (2023 – present). *Official journal of the European Health Communication Association (EHCA)*.

<https://ejhc.org/about>

**Exam topics and/or questions:**

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1. Elements and models of communication in healthcare
2. Verbal vs. non-verbal communication
3. Building trust and empathy in patient interactions
4. Crisis and conflict communication
5. Cultural competence and ethical communication
6. Digital communication and misinformation in health contexts

**Required professional competences (linked to programme outcomes):**

**Knowledge**

- Understands core concepts, forms, and models of healthcare communication
- Knows the principles of patient education and health literacy
- Familiar with documentation and information systems relevant to healthcare communication

**Skills**

- Communicates effectively with patients, relatives, and healthcare teams
- Applies communication strategies to specific patient populations and contexts
- Produces clear and accurate written and verbal communication
- Demonstrates teamwork and leadership in interprofessional settings

**Attitude**

- Empathetic, patient-centred, and respectful
- Values human dignity, patient rights, and cultural diversity
- Open to feedback and continuous self-reflection

**Autonomy and responsibility**

- Takes responsibility for professional communication

- Acts ethically and independently within professional limits
- Contributes to the development of a safe, supportive communication culture

Notes (e.g. special device, student number limits): No special equipment required. Optimal group size: 20–25 students.