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Gallagher Monthly Minute

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Tips to Control the Risk with Communication

Studies show that poor physician/patient communication can lead to lawsuits.

Some tips to strengthen communication include:

- At the initial visit, try to make your patient feel at ease by asking them non-medical questions.
- Look your patient in the eye and listen intently. Let them speak uninterrupted for at least two minutes.
- Provide sufficient time to personally care for each patient.
- Work on open conversation: "Can you tell me more about...?"
- Assess the patients emotional needs and use terms that show empathy: "You seem really worried" (from the Four Habits Model-see side bar.)
- Use the teach-back method to ensure patients comprehend and remember treatment information.
- The physician patient relationship can be affected by your staff. Ask yourself "What impression does my office team make on our patients?"

These tips help your relationship with your patients to be built on mutual trust and open communication which in turn may help decrease the risk of malpractice claims.

Stay tuned for the next Gallagher Monthly Minute, *Control the risk with effective documentation.*

The [Four Habits Model](#) to improve communication in the medical interview.

The [Talking Cure for Healthcare](#) article discusses the need for better communication on the part of physicians.

Contact Gallagher Healthcare with any medical professional liability policy questions or medical risk issues.

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