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Enhancing Medical Visits for Older Adults: Strategies to Improve Patient Engagement and Clinician Communication

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Patient-centered care has become a foundational principle in healthcare systems; however, most implementation efforts focus almost exclusively on training clinicians to communicate more effectively, with limited attention to the patient's role in the communication exchange. This session challenges that imbalance by introducing the concept of structured patient communication training as an essential, missing component of true patient-centered care. The presentation will demonstrate how communication training traditionally reserved for clinicians can be adapted and successfully delivered to patients in a simple framework. Attendees will explore why current models fall short and how redefining patient preparation can fundamentally improve the clinical encounter.

Following this presentation, the participant will be able to:

- Recognize the gap in patient-centered care frameworks by examining how current models largely overlook structured patient communication training.
- Identify strategies that patients can successfully learn, retain, and apply core communication skills traditionally taught to clinicians.
- Define evidence-based, practical patient communication training models designed to increase patient engagement, confidence, and participation in healthcare interactions.

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