

Evaluation of the DIET-COMMS training package- the journey so far

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What is DIET-COMMS?



- Communication skills are important for all healthcare professionals and dietitians do most of their care by communicating with service users to support behaviour change- but
 - ❓ ***How do we assess the communication skills of dietitians?***
- DIET-COMMS was developed and validated to support the assessment of communication skills in the context of a consultation between a dietitian and a patient or client (Whitehead *et al.*, 2014)
- One side of A4, tick box, 20 items

Survey number

Assessment of Communication skills in dietetic client consultations

Year of Study 1 2 3 4 Post graduate (circle as appropriate)

Dietitian/student dietitian name/number _____

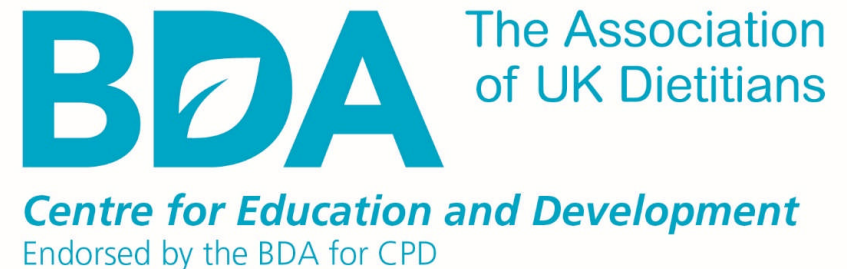
ITEM No.	ITEM	SCORE		
		0	1	2
1	Greeting and introductions			
2	Establishes what led up to & clarifies reason for consultation.			
3.	Outlines what to expect from the visit.			
4	Listening to and demonstrating understanding of the client's story			
5	Establishes rapport.			
6	Checks understanding of medical condition.			
7	Offers information on how food relates to the condition			
8	Completes (clinical, behavioural and dietary) assessment.			
9	Works in partnership with client to identify possible dietary changes. Explores possible difficulties.			
10	Checks understanding and agreement on client determined goals. Develops a plan prioritising key goals.			
11	Offers written information to reinforce verbal.			
12	Agrees next steps with the client.			

Descriptors

Item	Description and examples
1. Greeting and introductions	<p>Greets patient</p> <p>Shows the patient where to sit (if appropriate).</p> <p>Checks the patient's name, address and date of birth to ensure they have the correct person.</p> <p>Asks what the patient would like to be called including their title e.g. Ms, Mrs etc.</p> <p>Introduces self and role/status e.g. Tahira Begum, student dietitian/specialist dietitian. The healthcare professional could also state what they would like to be called e.g. I am happy for you to call me Tahira.</p> <p>States the time available for the consultation and checks if that is alright with the patient (may not be appropriate in non-clinic settings).</p> <p>Some small talk to help the patient feel more at ease.</p> <p>The ideal would be friendly but professional, relaxed and not rushed.</p> <p>(NB. Time could be clarified in item 3 and therefore the dietitian/student should not be marked down for missing it out of the introduction)</p>

The development of the DIET-COMMS training package

- Grant from BDA General Education Trust
- Advisory Group
- Preparation of resources
- Launch events and accreditation
- Evaluation



What does the training package contain?

- Videos (interviewer, patient and service user views)
- DIET-COMMS and Descriptors
- Feedback sheets
- A tool to practice assessing
- Guidance sheets
- References
- Evaluation survey
- http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/toolkits/play_13244

Evaluation-Online survey embedded into the training package

- Over 6000 hits **BUT** only 18 completed the survey (9 RDs, 9 students).
- 15/18 would use the training package again, 3 not sure.
- Video clips were perceived to be the most useful part
- 17/18 more aware of the need for good communication skills
- 15 more aware of the evidence base
- 13 improved their communication skills, 4 not sure
- 16 felt it had helped them to improve how they assess communication skills.

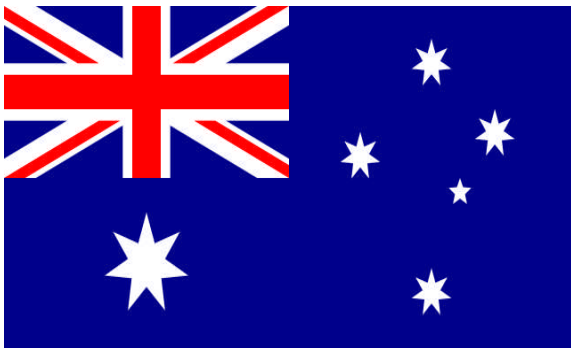
User comments

I would definitely encourage use of this programme for students and qualified staff to develop communication skills for patient centred care.

We are in the process of redeveloping our teaching, OSCE assessment tools and a placement assessment tools to align them to your assessment tool. We will be using the package in our teaching and also recommending it to Dietitians in Wales and Dietetic managers.

This is the first time I have come across the website or heard of it. It is so helpful especially as I have my B placement coming up in February next year. Maybe this training package could be advertised a little more as I feel it would really benefit a lot of dietitians, especially students, by providing useful tips

Where is it being used?



Universities using the package include

- Robert Gordon University,
- Glasgow Caledonian
- University of Cardiff
- University of Nottingham
- University of Plymouth,
- London Metropolitan,
- University of Canberra,
- Scottish Clinical Placements

Also [European Association for Communication in Healthcare](#)



Student survey

- Students from
 - University of Nottingham, London Metropolitan University, Robert Gordon University
- 24/25 students rated the package as useful
- **All** students were more aware of the importance of communication skills in consultations
- 23 felt the training package helped them to develop their skills
- 23 students would recommend the package to fellow students.
- 19 said they would use it more if it was available as an app

Student comments

‘The contrasting videos I used the most and found helped me with my consultation practice exam and placement!’

‘I think it's a fantastic tool and students should be encouraged more to use it’


‘Really useful tool and highlights the importance of effective and efficient communication’



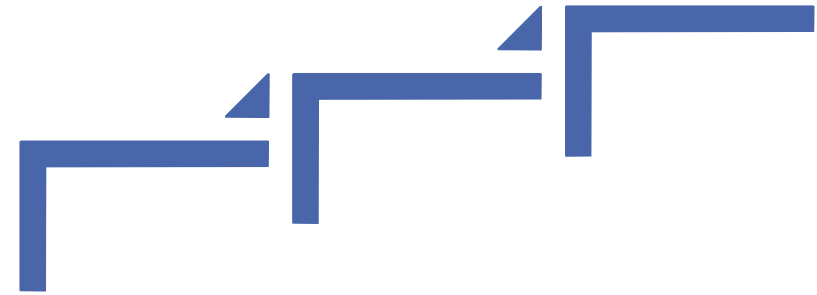
Focus group

- 7 students from the University of Nottingham, 3rd (pre-12 week B practice placement) and 4th year (post -B placement) students.
- Training package introduced from 2nd year and used in teaching in 3rd and 4th years.
- Feedback very similar to survey
 - *'I thought the videos were really good. Actually seeing what a bad, acceptable and good consultation is and sort of seeing the difference.everything you say in the bad consultation. You think oh God no how could she actually say that'.*
 - *'I think having structure of the written sheet as well of what order to do things in helps me try to remember the structure in my consultations. Right I've done this, what do I need to do now, this this kind of thing'*

Summary of the evaluation

- The DIET-COMMS training package is being widely used and integrated into dietetic education across the UK and beyond
 - The evaluation has been positive with a few indicators for development
 - The package is being developed further in response to feedback
 - Further evaluation is required as poor response rate means that the results could be biased
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Next steps



- More focus groups and more year groups to complete the survey at more universities to gain better data-Write up evaluation
- Web based App (planned for September 2017)
- Does using the training package lead to development of skills? (further research)
- Using the package for peer observation in the workplace (Case study)
- Further development of the package (ward based videos ready to add)
- Networking and increasing awareness (to increase usage)
- Use beyond dietetics?

Any questions?