

EDITORIAL

Humanization in Medical Residency

*"First the patient, second the patient, third the patient,
fourth the patient, fifth the patient, and then maybe comes science."*

Bela Schick (1877 -1967)

Aphorisms and Facetiae of Bela Schick

The commitment to humanizing medicine, particularly within the practice during medical residency, remains a fundamental concern in teaching hospitals and medical schools. The key discussion, pragmatically, revolves around how to carry out this process in a natural yet systematic manner.

The interaction between a resident physician and their patient must extend beyond formal, technical, or purely academic aspects. It is essential to recognize that this human connection should be built on respect, meaningful rapport, and a sense of responsibility. Resident physicians must never forget that medicine is, at its core, a profoundly human and compassionate science.

A resident physician with a true vocation should take genuine satisfaction in helping others. Medicine harnesses technological advances in the biological sciences to fulfill this humanistic mission. However, a physician with a strong humanistic foundation is not only a more skilled clinician but also a better person.

Humanism in the doctor-patient relationship is one of the greatest virtues of humanity and a fundamental tool for professionals who care for those in pain and suffering. It must be taught through practice, just as one learns to conduct an anamnesis or perform a thorough physical examination. A humane approach begins the moment a patient is first welcomed—with a warm handshake, addressing them by their name, having a compassionate gaze, and calm, reassuring words. It is reflected in the physician's ability to recognize the patient's vulnerability, respect their dignity, and foster a sense of trust and comfort.

Knowing how to convey confidence is an art rooted in the understanding that words can sometimes wound more deeply than a scalpel. When communicating with patients, it is essential to eliminate any trace of arrogance, vanity, or self-interest. A genuinely skillful resident physician is one who is available, attentive, and fully receptive to patients' concerns, never dismissing or underestimating their complaints.

I consider it absolutely essential that preceptors and medical school professors teach compassion and empathy as the most accessible and effective form of medicine. These values serve as the cornerstone of humanism in contemporary medicine.

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