



Joe Farmer

Penny Hurst

Abhijit Pal

You get to your morning clinic and the senior doctor is already in a bad mood. They woke up late this morning because they forgot to set an alarm. They didn't have time for breakfast and don't have time for coffee now. The clinic is full and one of your colleagues has called in sick. You ask them a simple question about a patient and they shout at you. Does this sound familiar?

We have had several run-ins with senior colleagues like this. Doctors who are frequently rude find it easier to be rude again, like flexing a muscle. One junior doctor we know was so scared of facing such rudeness, that he didn't inform a senior about a new patient he admitted. He waited until handover, a few hours later, to mention the patient – a woman in A&E with severe lower abdominal pain. A woman who likely needed urgent surgery for suspected ovarian torsion. A woman who was now at risk of losing her ovary. At risk of a worse outcome, simply because a senior had been rude and unsupportive to the junior doctor.

Medicine requires teamwork. To achieve the best outcomes for a patient, a team needs to perform well. Good relationships between clinicians can help a team run like a well-oiled machine. There are many elements that contribute to good relationships, and being civil (or nice) is one of these. On the flip side of this, therefore, is incivility. Rudeness can manifest easily within a team, and, like a faulty cog, can cause a breakdown. When a team breaks down, it negatively impacts clinical outcomes of our patients.

Christine Porath is an Associate Professor of Business in the US, who has done a multitude of office-based research into the impacts of incivility. She found that people who experience incivility in the workplace waste time dwelling on the rudeness^[1]. They can even become less committed to their work, and lose time avoiding the person who was previously rude to them. Almost half of the recipients spent less time at work, and over 10% will leave completely. If you consider this within healthcare, you can imagine the effect it would have on our ability to do our work, and therefore the impact on our patients.

The effects of incivility don't stop there; they have been shown to have a wider impact than you might initially think, like a stone being dropped in a large pond. The ripples spread out amongst those around, not just affecting the subject of the rudeness. People who witness incivility show reduced performance and are 50% less likely to help

others . If a patient sees this happening, they will have less trust in the organisation and will feel anxious dealing with other staff members.

Gradually we are seeing more scientific papers highlighting the impact of rudeness on clinical performance. A randomised control study by Riskin et al. observed neonatal resus teams working on a simulated emergency scenario, assessing their d] h]l.

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