



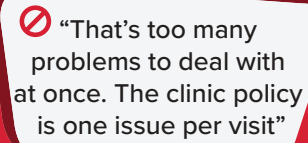
EQUITY TALK POCKET CARDS

*Small shifts in the way you speak to a
someone can make a big difference!*

Version | April 2022

Setting the Tone

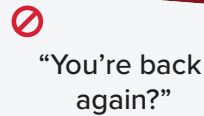
INSTEAD OF...

 “That’s too many
problems to deal with
at once. The clinic policy
is one issue per visit”

5A

*Starting a visit
or appointment*

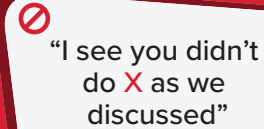
INSTEAD OF...

 “You’re back
again?”

1A

*Discussing Care
Options*

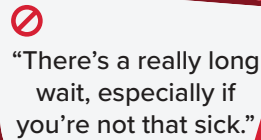
INSTEAD OF...

 “I see you didn’t
do X as we
discussed”

6A

*Starting a visit
or appointment*

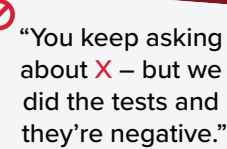
INSTEAD OF...

 “There’s a really long
wait, especially if
you’re not that sick.”

2A

*Discussing Care
Options*

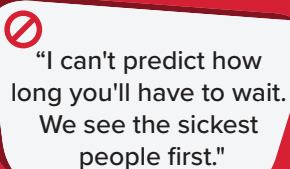
INSTEAD OF...

 “You keep asking
about X – but we
did the tests and
they’re negative.”

7A

*Starting a visit or
appointment*

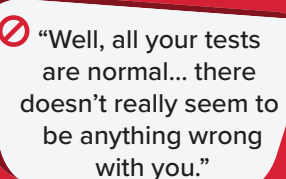
INSTEAD OF...

 “I can’t predict how
long you’ll have to wait.
We see the sickest
people first.”

3A

*Discussing Care
Options*

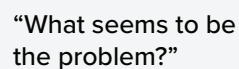
INSTEAD OF...

 “Well, all your tests
are normal... there
doesn’t really seem to
be anything wrong
with you.”

8A

Setting the Tone

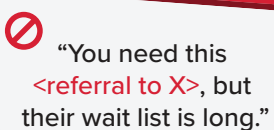
INSTEAD OF...

 “What seems to be
the problem?”

4A

*Discussing Care
Options*

INSTEAD OF...

 “You need this
<referral to X>, but
their wait list is long.”

9A



“You've got a lot going on right now. I'd like to suggest we focus on X and Y today, but I want to make sure we have enough time to fully explore A and B.

Can we arrange a follow up visit for that?”

5B



“Please tell me how things have been since our last visit.”

OR

“Last time you were here, we had a plan to do X. How did that work out for you?”

OR

“How has it been going with X? Do we need to look at changing something to help you meet your goals?”

6B



“It's good to see you again.”

THEN

“How can we help you today?”

1B



“Please tell me more about what you think might be going on.”

7B



“It's pretty busy right now, with an average wait of X depending on how ill someone is. Are there other options for you to get help where you won't have to wait as long?”

IF YES...

“What could help connect you to them?”

IF NO...

“Let's look at some other options where you won't have to wait as long”

2B



“We ordered tests to see if you might have X or Y, and now that we've ruled those out, we can talk about next steps to help with your symptoms.”

8B



“I'm sorry you have to wait today; I know it's hard when you're worried about your health.

Can I get you something (e.g., water, magazine)?”

3B



“I'd like to make a referral to X but their wait can be quite long.

If you agree, we'll make the referral today, but let's talk about shorter term options to support you while you wait for that appointment.”

9B



“What would you like to discuss today?”

4B

USING THESE POCKET CARDS

These cards are intended to help you shift from language that might be perceived by service users as judgemental or stigmatizing, to ways of engaging in conversation

Research has shown that these approaches lead to better interactions, and therefore provide you, as the provider, with a better picture of the person's concerns, which should lead to better next steps on the care path.

EQUIP and the Health Equity Toolkit are funded by CIHR and the Public Health Agency of Canada

For more information about EQUIP Health Care please visit:
www.equiphealthcare.ca

Download our app from the Apple App Store or Google Play

Navigating Pain Management

INSTEAD OF...

⊘ "It seems like you're not really having pain (or your pain isn't that bad)."

⊘ "It seems like you're looking for pain medications when you don't need them."

OR

"There really isn't a reason for your pain"

10A

When Signs of Stress are Observed

INSTEAD OF...

⊘ "You really need to calm down."

⊘ "If you don't settle down, I'm calling security/you'll be asked to leave"

14A

Talking About Alcohol & Drug use

INSTEAD OF...

⊘ "How much do you drink?"

11A

When Signs of Stress are Observed

INSTEAD OF...

⊘ "You're just doing this for attention. If you really wanted to die, you wouldn't have called for help."

15A

Talking About Alcohol & Drug use

INSTEAD OF...

⊘ "Well, I really can't help you unless you stop drinking/using"...

12A

When Signs of Stress are Observed

INSTEAD OF...

⊘ "What's wrong? Have you been using?"

13A



EQUIP Health Care

Equipping Health & Social Services for Equity

How to cite this tool

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These suggested ways to engage prioritize active listening, using open-ended questions that invite people to offer up their own perspectives, worries or understanding of a situation; avoid close-ended, judgmental questions or statements that are laden with assumptions.

While the suggested phrasing will not work for every scenario, we are inviting you to think about how you inquire into service users' needs, experiences and decisions. We hope that these suggested phrases can help you improve the safety of your practice.



"I hear that you're upset/angry. I'm here to help, but it's hard for me to help when you're yelling."

OR

"It's not easy asking for help. Is anything worrying you?"

IF YES...

"Would you like to talk about that?"

IF NO...

"Would you like to take a short break and we can start again in a few minutes, or you can check back later?"

14B



"It sounds like you're in a lot of discomfort. There are many rules about what we can give for pain these days. Let's talk through some options and see what you think might work best for you."

OR

"That medication isn't a great option for you, but I'd like to find other ways to help you manage your pain/condition."

10B



"It's hard to reach out for help. It must have been scary to have tried to kill yourself. We take this seriously and are here to help."

15B



"In order to provide the best care possible, it's helpful for me to know about people's alcohol use. We ask everyone this. Could you tell me if you drink alcohol?"

IF YES...

"OK, and can you tell me how much and how often you drink? For example, most days? Once a week?"

11B



"Let's discuss how best to help you. What's important to you right now, and how can we start to get there?"

OR

"I know that you know that using/drinking is getting in the way of your health, but where would you like to start?"

12B



"How are you doing right now?"

OR

"How are things going- you look like you're having some trouble"

THEN

"Is there something I can do to help you relax or feel more comfortable?"

13B