



Teaching Medical English

An Overview of Requirements,
Training, & Application

Professionals

- ▶ Health care professionals include clinicians as well as researchers
 - doctors
 - nurses
 - pharmacists
 - technicians

Fields

- ▶ Public/community health
- ▶ Family medicine
- ▶ Emergency medicine
- ▶ Radiology/diagnostic medicine
- ▶ Medical sciences

Language Requirements

- ▶ Teachers should be fluent in English and proficient in health care field
- ▶ Students need basic foundation in English
 - Medical language is highly technical

Career Specific

- ▶ Adult learner already has skill set and knowledge base in medical field
- ▶ What is needed is English language instruction

Classes

- ▶ Students need to use language in meaningful ways
- ▶ Students encouraged to develop critical thinking skills in target language
- ▶ Students learn language in context

Training

In order to be successful, training should:

- ▶ Be relevant to job
- ▶ Employ authentic speech
- ▶ Instruct verbal as well as non verbal communication
- ▶ Include social skills to develop rapport with patients

Authentic Language

- ▶ Recreate realities professionals may encounter:
 - Learn how to talk to patients using role plays
 - Study real-life cases
 - Read textbooks and scholarly journals
 - Report research

Application

- ▶ Apply language to real- life situations
- ▶ “Think on your feet” problem solving

Language

- ▶ Depending on needs, language may include:
- ▶ Medical concepts
- ▶ Technical language
- ▶ Medical terms and procedures
- ▶ Abbreviations and acronyms
- ▶ Slang

Language Continued

- ▶ Case studies
- ▶ Interactions
- ▶ Medical practices
- ▶ Treatment
- ▶ Pharmacology

Course of study

- ▶ Prepare health care professional to provide safe medical care
 - Errors can be life-threatening
- ▶ Build on existing skill set and knowledge base in field

Activities

- ▶ Activities in the classroom may include:
 - Role play between doctor and patient, admitting procedures, emergency care, etc.
 - Worksheets, word searches
 - Listening
 - Pronunciation practice
 - DVDs of real life situations

Conclusion

- ▶ Medical English field is growing in global economy
- ▶ Need continues for skilled, dedicated teachers

Sources

- ▶ www.usingenglish.com