

Improving Patient Experience: ASK 3 Paediatric Tool

An Innovative Doctor-Patient Communication Tool

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BACKGROUND:

Effective communication with patients and parents is critical in Paediatrics to ensure compliance, trust, and improved patient experience and outcomes ¹. Many parents and children attending Paediatric assessment units (PAUs) often feel uncertain about what to expect during consultations.

To address this, we co-designed a structured communication tool - **ASK 3 Paediatric Tool** – in collaboration with children, parents and doctors.

AIM:

Our aim was to develop and implement a standardized communication tool, that helps parents and children receive clear and concise answers from doctors regarding their child's condition, treatment, and next steps while encouraging shared-decision making and ensuring high patient satisfaction.

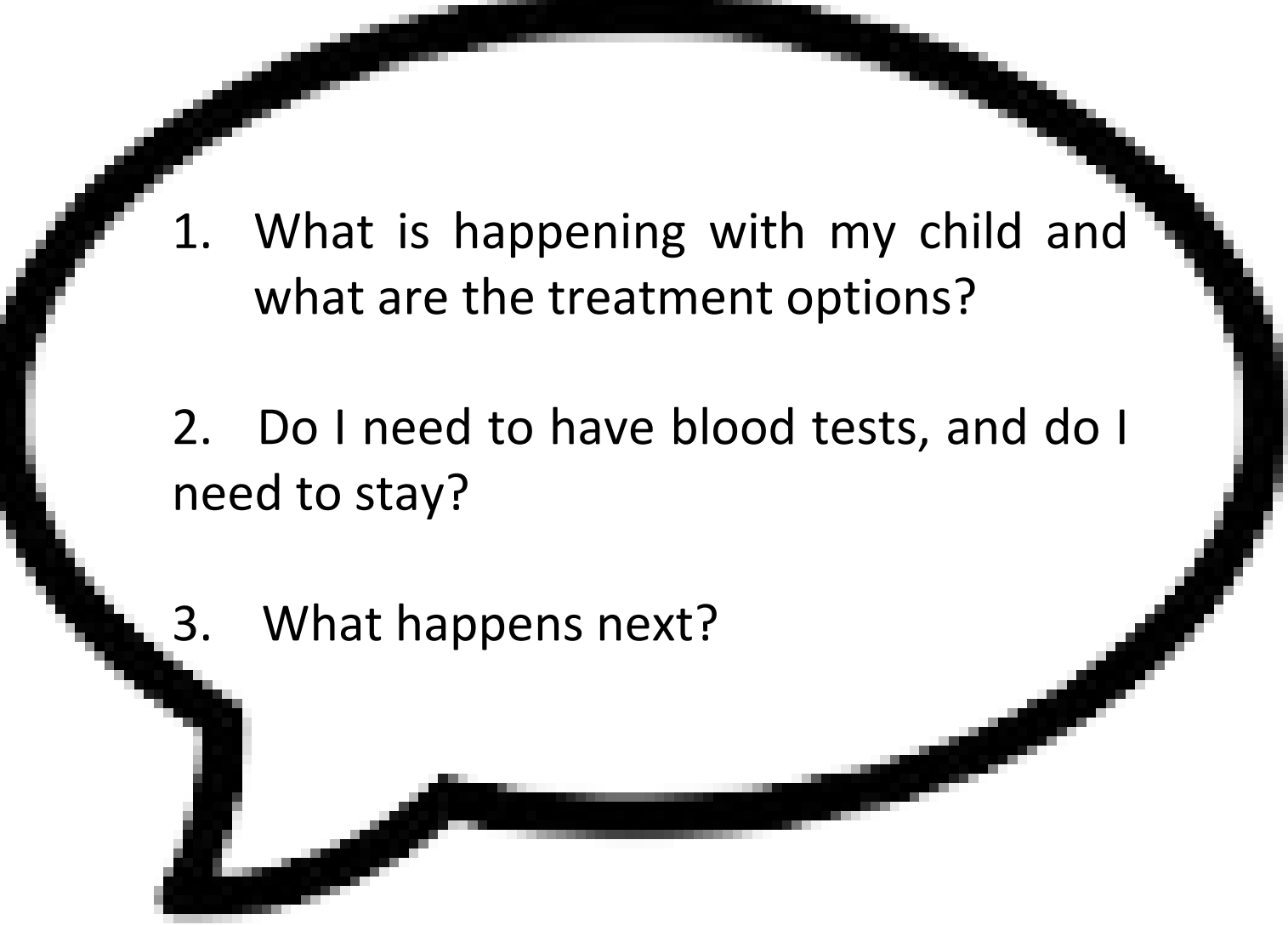
METHODOLOGY:

Survey & Data Collection:

We conducted initially a questionnaire survey in PAU to identify the key concerns of parents and children.

Tool Development:

Based on survey feedback, three common questions were incorporated:



Pilot Testing:

The tool was tested in outpatient clinics and PAU settings. Patients, parents, and doctors were invited to provide feedback, leading to refinements in the wording and the design of this tool.

Evaluation:

The revised tool was reassessed through qualitative focus interviews and questionnaire with parents and doctors to measure its impact on communication and patient satisfaction.



RESULTS:

24 parents and 9 children who participated in this study, identified the key questions they wanted to be addressed during their consultation with the healthcare providers. Based on their feedback, the ASK 3 Paediatric Tool was developed.

When this questionnaire was further evaluated across 11 doctor-patient consultations, all the parents reported that they found the tool helpful, easy to use and highly effective in addressing their concerns. They noted that it helped them think of questions they might not have considered, especially when feeling overwhelmed with a sick child. By gaining better understanding of the treatment options, they felt more involved in the decision-making process.

Healthcare providers reported that the tool improved clarity in their consultations, set standards for what needed to be covered and enhanced shared decision-making. They also mentioned that it did not prolong the length of their consultations.

Importantly, no communication-related complaints were recorded during the consultations when this tool was used.

CONCLUSION:

The ASK 3 Paediatric Tool successfully improved communication between doctors, parents, and children in this study conducted in our PAU.

This tool helps standardise consultations, proactively addresses common concerns and fosters shared –decisions making, ultimately enhancing the patient experience.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

We aim to incorporate digital formats for wider accessibility and explore the tool’s impact on a larger cohort, along with its influence on healthcare outcomes.

Acknowledgment: To all our patients, parents, nursing staff and doctors who participated in this study.

Reference: Davison G, Conn R, Kelly MA, Thompson A, Dornan T. Fifteen-minute consultation: Guide to communicating with children and young people. Arch Dis Child Educ Pract Ed. 2023 Apr;108(2):91-95. doi: 10.1136/archdischild-2021-323302. Epub 2021 Dec 2. PMID: 34857651.
Lindig A, Hahlweg P, Frerichs W, Topf C, Reemts M, Scholl I. Adaptation and qualitative evaluation of Ask 3 Questions - a simple and generic intervention to foster patient empowerment. Health Expect. 2020 Oct;23(5):1310-1325. doi: 10.1111/hex.13114. Epub 2020 Aug 1. PMID: 32738027; PMCID: PMC7696208.