

QUALITY ISSUES IN COMPLEX CONSULTATIONS : WHEN THE PATIENT IS A DOCTOR

Luc Lefebvre Arts in nood Antwerpen 10.12.2011

Objectives

- 1) Acknowledge the complexity of the doctor-doctor consultation
- 2) Describe the factors that influence the quality of a consultation between two doctors
- 3) Consider ways to optimise these factors for a higher quality care to patients who are doctors

Plan

Quality of care for doctors as patients

Quality issues for doctors who treat doctors

Are doctors different ?

- ✓ We can expect the same epidemiology as in the general population for many conditions
- ✓ Impact of Medical Knowledge? Many doctors do not smoke; protective effect for some conditions. Yet many doctors do not reduce risk factors, exercise, diet etc

Are doctors different ?

- ✓ Being a doctor puts you at greater risk of certain psychological & psychiatric illness
- ✓ (Report to) healthcare is different for doctors.

Doctors Morbidity & Mortality

- » Stress, anxiety and depression (J Firth Cozens 2003, Caplan 1994, Tyssen 2000)
- » Burnout 48% (CMA)
1 axe : Emotional detachment
- » Suicide RR ~3 for male
~5.7 for female doctors
(Lindemann 1997)
- » Pancreatic cancer and other cancer in some specialties
- » Many other risks are the same as in the general population

YET we have a Low Rate of Sickness Absence

- ✓ Did you go to work with an illness that would qualify you for sickness absence ?
- ✓ 80 % of doctors said YES this happened in past 1 year

(Elin Rosvold, Norway, 2001)

Physicians Psychological Vulnerabilities

- Self-criticism
- Try to please everyone
- Excessive sense of responsibility
- Guilt for things we can't control
- “Can never do enough”
- Perfectionism
- Conscientious
- Chronic self doubt
- Withhold love & care from self & colleagues & from family

NEJM 1972 Vaillant et al

Kenmerken van de persoonlijkheid van de huisarts

- ✓ grote verantwoordelijkheidszin
- ✓ schuldgevoel
- ✓ perfectionisme
- ✓ trekt zichzelf voortdurend in twijfel
- ✓ wil de situatie onder controle houden
- ✓ wil patiënt een plezier doen
- ✓ Voelt zich ongemakkelijk bij gevoelens

Impact of the Environments of our Medical Training & our Work

- Peer pressure
 - Competitiveness
 - Hard work
 - Put patients first
-
- Desensitisation to distress
 - Complex psychology of caring

Pre-Consultation Phase

- Contemplation, delay
- High threshold for seeking help
- Making an appointment by telephone
- Venue: medical meeting, corridor, golf course, clinic, garage, on holiday
- Social conversation at start of consultation merging with the medical assessment part of consultation

Issues for doctor as patient

- ✓ Denial
- ✓ Role reversal
- ✓ Fear
- ✓ Stigma
- ✓ Control
- ✓ Confidentiality
- ✓ Trust

Obstacles for doctors seeking healthcare

Patient factors :

- Embarrassment
- Time / cost
- Personality
- Specialty :Who to see
- Knowledge
- Awareness of implications

Provider factors :

- Confidentiality
- Quality of care

System factors :

- Culture
 - » Structure

M Kay et al BJGP July
2008 (Australia)

Can we trust / accept another doctors advice?



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Plan

Quality of care for doctors as patients

Quality issues for doctors who treat doctors

Doctor - Patient
Relationship

Vs

Doctor-doctor - Doctor-patient
Relationship

Why doctors need personal support ?

- ✓ Deficiencies with accepted 'traditional' arrangements for doctors' healthcare
- ✓ Complex issues to be considered within a consultation between two doctors
- ✓ Working in medicine is associated with occupational hazards especially psychosocial, chemical & self medication

Challenges for doctors who treat medically qualified patients

- ✓ Embarrassment
- ✓ Short-cuts with questions and clinical examination
- ✓ Does patient know more ?
- ✓ Is a prescription/advice given ?
- ✓ Who is responsible for results, referral and follow up ?
- ✓ Clinical authority : should the patient keep control of care ?

Consultation Checklist ©ICGP

- ✓ Presenting complaint; are questions asked?
- ✓ Medical History, including self medication
- ✓ Clinical Examination: no shortcuts
- ✓ Investigations: procedure & process
- ✓ Prescriptions: choice, negotiation, information, interactions
- ✓ Referral: outpatient and inpatient, choice
- ✓ Clear Plan for Follow-up, results, progress

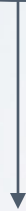
Quality of Healthcare for Doctors

- Is an important factor in the delivery of quality of healthcare for patients

zorgkwaliteit
VOOR ARTSEN



Arts
Gezondheid & Welzijn

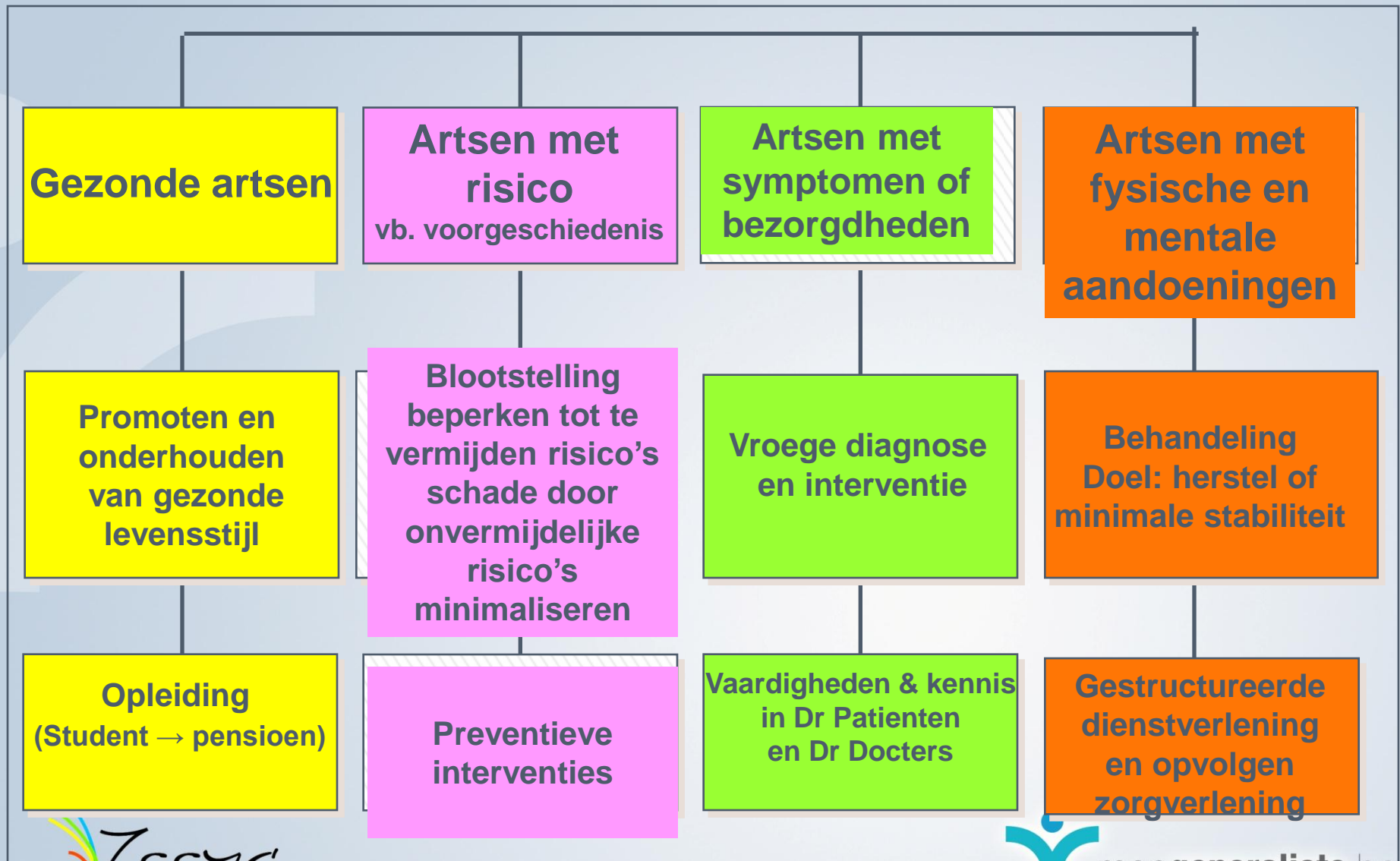


zorgkwaliteit
VOOR PATIENTEN

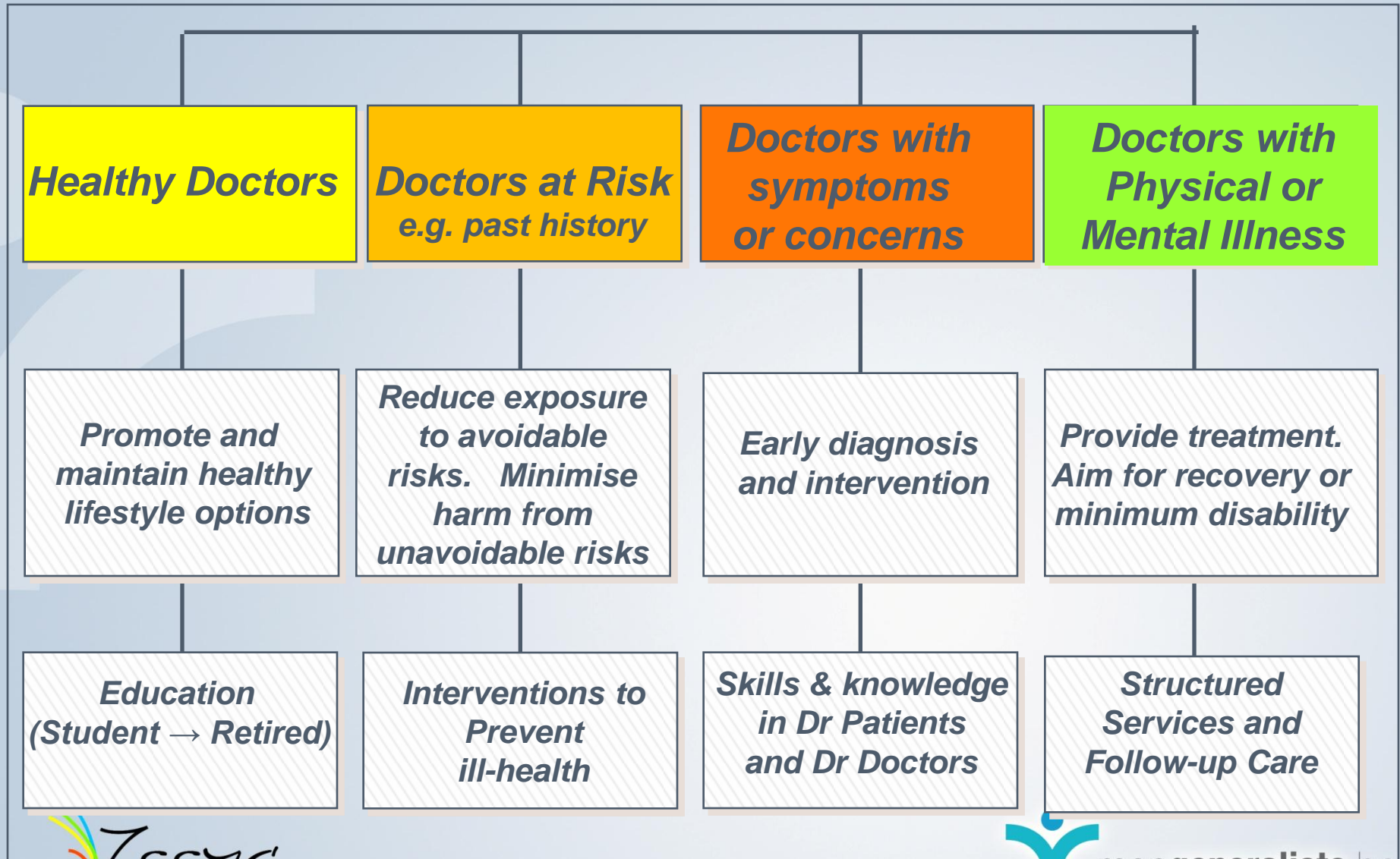
Terminate the Myths

- ✓ Doctors do not get sick
- ✓ Doctors do not make mistakes
- ✓ Doctors have all the answers
- ✓ Doctors know how to cure themselves
- ✓ Doctors never get side effects from medication or complication from procedures
- ✓ Doctors don't die

Uitdagingen bij gezondheidszorg voor artsen



Challenges associated with provision of healthcare for doctors ©ICGP



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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