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## Comments from Fellows

Sharing a new diagnosis of dementia is challenging because . . . .

- “It’s life changing”
- “Difficult nature of the disease”
- “Hard to be concise”
- “Time limitation”
- “Denial [from patient or family]”
- “You never know how they will react”
- “The uncertainty of the progression”

## Background

- Major neurocognitive disorder (dementia) is underdiagnosed
- Patients and surrogates report not being given a concrete diagnosis by their physician
- Counseling can be challenging given the emotions that often surround this terminal disease
- Lack of definitive treatment options limit physician confidence in communication
- Lack of insight by the patient due to the disease can add to communication challenges

## Methods

- Two Hour Workshop for Geriatric fellows
- Introductory Lecture
- Role play
  - Re-enacting real-life scenarios with challenging dynamics
  - Practice communicating diagnosis
  - Four different cases
- Pretest and posttest questions were administered
- Sixteen fellows responded over a two-year period

**Fellows report increased confidence in communicating a diagnosis of dementia after a workshop teaching communication skills followed by participation in simulation cases**

**Fellows report this workshop will change their future practice**

## Future Directions

- Standardized Patients
- Expand to Primary Care Residents
- Increase Complexity & Length

## Conclusions

Due to the complex emotions involved in the diagnosis of dementia, teaching providers skills to communicate this diagnosis is imperative to patient care. We have developed a workshop that enables providers to learn the necessary skills to do this with more confidence.

## Results

