



**Workshop name**

**Difficult Doctor Patient Relationships**

Learning practical skills to deal with difficult situations and demanding patients

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**Target audience**

General Practitioners and Specialists

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**Duration**

4 hours

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**Other recommended workshops**

**Recommended to undertake before this workshop:**

- Doctor Patient Communications
- Mastering Your Risk

**Recommended to undertake after this workshop:**

- Clinical Clinical Communications Program
- Mastering Adverse Outcomes
- Choices and Changes

See overviews at [www.cognitiveinstitute.org](http://www.cognitiveinstitute.org)

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**Number of participants**

Optimum 7-15  
Minimum 5  
Maximum 25

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**CME**

Refer to College Accreditation and Points Document at [www.cognitiveinstitute.org](http://www.cognitiveinstitute.org) or email [enquiries@cognitiveinstitute.org](mailto:enquiries@cognitiveinstitute.org)

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**Format**

Workshop with short lectures, reflective exercises, small group facilitated discussions, group activities, rehearsal of skills.

Brief didactic presentations will provide the focus for small group sessions in which participants are able to share experience and pool knowledge, enabling critical comparison of their skills with their peers and peer learning. Videotaped case vignettes will be used to enable participants to analyse and reflect upon their own skills. The format has been carefully structured to enable a mix of lectures, discussion, critical reflection and evaluation.

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**Presenter**

All presenters of Cognitive Institute workshops are Doctors who have a specific interest in communication skills and have undertaken formal communication skills training with the Institute.

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**Premise**

Sometimes visits between Doctors and patients can be complex and difficult. Difficult Doctor Patient Relationships is designed to provide new approaches to work through difficult encounters.

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**Objectives**

- To discover each participant's unique perceptual pattern that classifies a patient as 'difficult'
  - To explore different techniques for working with challenging patients
  - To learn and develop practical communication skills that can be applied immediately
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## Overview

Dealing with 'difficult' patients and situations is a regular occurrence in general and specialist practice and something that can often prove very frustrating.

Many articles have been written about working with 'difficult' patients. However, sometimes the difficulty is more in the relationship. To experience effective and positive consultations Doctors ultimately need to respond in a constructive way to difficult situations.

This workshop challenges Doctors to examine the patterns of interactions with patients that cause them the greatest difficulty and to develop communication strategies within an interactive, experiential context. Learning new approaches for working with these situations is facilitated by the exploration of videotaped case scenarios. Each case presents a unique difficulty, but one that is faced by most Doctors at some time during their careers.

Two conceptual models are introduced to frame both the problems and the possibilities of difficult relationships. The first examines some of the factors that lead Doctors to apply the label 'difficult' to a situation. The second describes strategies that a Doctor can use to respond to these situations.

### **To improve relationships, Doctors learn how to:**

- Acknowledge problems
- Set boundaries
- Discover meaning
- Show compassion
- Use support health professionals and networks

Difficult Doctor Patient Relationships uses videotaped case studies as a vehicle for small group interaction around realistic issues involving patients with standard conditions.

Participants practice using strategies with live case situations and receive feedback from their peers.

To facilitate continued investigation patient motivation, the workshop includes an extensive annotated bibliography with the workbook.

## Authors

This workshop was developed by the Institute for Healthcare Communication in the USA. The Cognitive Institute has adapted the materials for the Australasian context.

For information on the Cognitive Institute, presenters and workshops visit [www.cognitiveinstitute.org](http://www.cognitiveinstitute.org)

To book a workshop call Head Office on 61 7 3876 5711  
or email [enquiries@cognitiveinstitute.org](mailto:enquiries@cognitiveinstitute.org)

