How to Improve Patient Experience while wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Connecting with patients while wearing PPE is not easy!
You and the patient may feel anxious & uncomfortable. This can make it hard to communicate well and connect.

**Tips to help improve the experience:**

**Introduce**
Introduce yourself and your role at each visit. We all look the same in PPE! Consider personalizing your scrubs or ID badge.

**Body Language**
Sit at eye level. Smile! It will show up in your eyes even if your mouth is covered. Use gestures like pointing to help communicate.

**Share**
Share information in short, easy to understand chunks. PPE can muffle your voice. Try to:

- Speak louder and slower
- Pronounce words clearly

**Listen**
Pause to listen. Listening is a powerful form of communication.

**Confirm**
Check patient identifying information (PPID). Confirm your patient hears and understands. Use “teach-back” to check.

**Acknowledge**
Acknowledge feelings of fear or discomfort. Notice these feelings and then communicate them to your patient.

Contact [UHN Patient Engagement](#) for more support.

**Remember to:**

**Use Resources**
Use pictures, calendars and handouts to help patients understand. Offer different ways for patients to communicate like pointing. Book an interpreter for patients with low English proficiency.

**Consider the Environment**
Try to find a quiet, private space. Reduce background noise. Think about time of day and how tired your patient is. These impact their ability to communicate.

*Credits to UHN SLP and Patient Education*