A Classification of the Behaviours of Doctors Patients and Computers in the Family Practice Consultation

Doctor's, Patients and Computers, The New Consultation

Dr Christopher Pearce PhD, MFM, MBBS, FRACGP, FACRRM

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL PRACTICE

This Study:

20 GPs and 134 useable consultations
7% patient refusal
33% doctor refusal
20% lost due to technical reasons

- Rural and Urban
- Female and Male
- Solo and Group Practice
- *ALL* use computers for clinical functions and progress notes.

The Study used a hermeneutic framework, with Goffman's dramaturgy as a methodology, to underpin a video observation method. The 134 videos were viewed by two reseachers, and from those observations a classification framework was derived, and then tested on repeated viewings. Other researchers have attempted to classify some behaviours, usually from the doctor's perspective. This is the first time all three players in the consultation have been so viewed.

We view the consultation as a performance, in that both doctors and patients adopt specific roles. The computer also has quite specific roles, which invariably shape the consultation. Doctors are described on the basis of whether the pole of their lower body remains fixed on the computer (unipolar), or rotates between patient and computer (bipolar). Patients similarly are seen to be inclusive of the computer (triadic) or focused on the doctor (dyadic). Within the consultation the computer is passive, or active. Several classes of behaviours have also been described.

Consulting Styles vs Behaviours

Doctors

- **Styles**
  - Unipolar: always has lower pole of body facing computer
  - Bipolar: alternates lower pole of body between computer/patient
- **Behaviours**
  - Disengaging
  - Engaging
  - Cogitating

Consulting Styles vs Behaviours

Patients

- **Styles**
  - Dyadic: inclusive of doctor
  - Triadic: inclusive of doctor *and* computer
- **Behaviours**
  - Screen-excluding
  - Screen-watching
  - Screen-controlling

Consulting Styles vs Behaviours

Computers

- **Styles**
  - Active: forces the computer into consultation
  - Passive: Computer involved by humans.
- **Behaviours**
  - Prompting
  - Distracting
  - Informative

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Summary | Notes | Checklists/Script Archive | Obstetric Hx | Social

CURRENT PROBLEMS

00/00/00	Diabetes;non insulin depend
00/00/00	Asthma

PAST HISTORY

04/06/75	Appendicectomy

ALLERGIES

Nil Known

Smoker
Alcohol

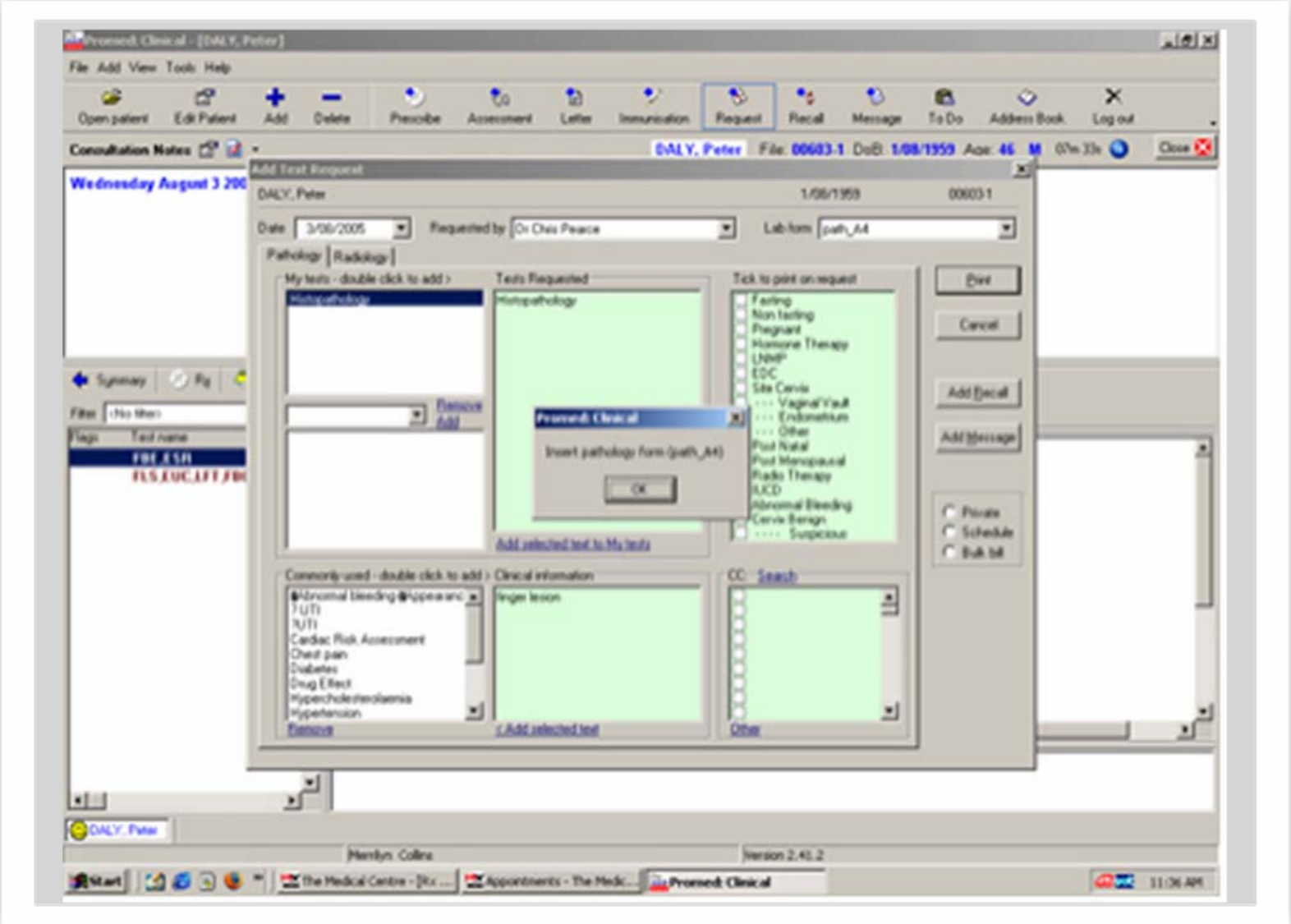
Certificate Drug List Flagged

QUICKSCRIPT

Reg 24
TPG =
Change Strength

Print	Medication	Dose	Frequency	Instructions	Qty	Rpt	Last Printed	Added	Once
	Accutrend Glucose Test Strip	use	a.c. & 1 hour p.c.	for blood sugars	[50]*2	5	09/12/99	00/00/00	
	Diaformin 500mg Tablets	2 tab	tds	for sugar contro	[100]	5	15/06/00	00/00/00	
	Diamicron 80mg Tablets	2 tab.	bd	for diabetes cont	[100]	5	21/03/00	00/00/00	

Passive Computer



Active Computer

DOCTORS	***Unipolar or Bipolar***
Engaging	*Engages the patient in the triad*
Disengaging	*Disengages the patient from the triad*
Cogitation/Evaluation	*Using computer as an aid*
PATIENTS	***Dyadic or Triadic***
Screen controlling	*Introduces computer into the consultation*
Screen watching	*Attends to the computer*
Screen excluding	*Ignores the computer*
COMPUTER	***Active or Passive***
Informative	*Provides Information into the consultation*
Prompt	*Reminders*
Distracter	*Distracts from the consultation*

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This Poster is part of the PhD: Doctors, Patients and Computers, the new consultation

An observational study into how doctors, patients and computers interact in the medical consultation.

cpearce@unimelb.edu.au

Carson likes to clear his mind so thoroughly it can't figure out how to move his body.

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