

were not expecting, they may refuse to pay and take legal action against the acupuncturist. However, if the acupuncturist had a financial consultation with the patient and communicated the fees and any out-of-pocket expenses upfront, the patient would have been aware of the costs and chosen a different treatment; or been prepared to pay the fees.

Building Trust and Increasing Referrals

In addition to avoiding legal action, effective communication can also build trust and rapport with patients. When patients feel they are being heard and their concerns are being addressed, they are more likely to continue treatment *and* refer others to you.

Thankfully, we find this comes naturally to acupuncturists based on their deep dive into a patient's health history and the amount of time spent with patients. Your patients having trust and rapport in you as their provider can lead to a more successful practice and a better reputation within the community.

Take-Home Points

Effective communication from an acupuncturist to your patients is essential for minimizing exposure and building trust. By obtaining informed consent, ensuring patients understand their treatment plan, and communicating clearly about payment and billing, acupuncturists can avoid potential misunderstandings and negative outcomes that could result in legal action. Effective communication can also lead to a more successful practice and a better reputation within the community.

As an acupuncturist, it is important to prioritize communication with patients and continually improve your communication skills to provide the best care possible.

JUNE 2023