



# TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNICATION

STARTS HERE!



Your patients have likely experienced some form of trauma, which may impact their behavior and reactions. Consider using these communication strategies to practice trauma-informed care.

## Patients' Perspectives

- 01** Consciously imagine the patient's experience, including their fears, biases, and past trauma.
- Pause and reflect: What might this person be feeling right now?
  - This builds empathy, reduces provider bias, and enhances patient trust.
  - Example: "I wonder what this current experience brings up for this patient."

## Emotional Awareness

- 02** Being sensitive to and validate the patient's emotional state.
- Use reflective listening and open body language.
  - Acknowledge distress without judgment.
  - Example: "It sounds like this has been really difficult for you. Thank you for sharing."

## Patient Autonomy

- 03** Encourage patients to take an active role in their care.
- Ask open-ended questions and affirm their strengths.
  - Collaborate with the patient on treatment plans and respecting their autonomy.
  - Offer choices and explain options clearly.
  - Example: "Here are a few ways we can approach this: what feels most comfortable?"

## Use of Grounding Techniques

- 04** Help patients stay present if they become overwhelmed.
- Offer grounding exercises like deep breathing or sensory focus.
  - Use when patient shows signs of dissociation or distress.
  - Example: "Let's take a deep breath in together, hold it for 1 second, and exhale slowly."

## Avoiding Triggers

- 05** Being mindful of language, tone, and procedures that may evoke traumatic memories.
- Ask about known triggers and explain actions before touching or examining.
  - Example: "I'm going to check your blood pressure now. Is that okay?"