

7Cs at a glance for reception staff

Be courageous

Have the courage to know you are an active participant in the patient's care. You set the scene for the interaction now and in the future: by giving a good first impression as they step through the door and by recognising they may be feeling scared or anxious, you are already helping to put them at their ease.

Connect emotionally

Don't forget your body language – good eye contact and a simple smile can make a world of difference for you and the patient. Body language can demonstrate that you are showing real interest and concern whilst still remaining professional.

Be curious

Use open questions – who, what, where, when, how – to show you are interested, listening and engaged. Open questions elicit more information and a better idea of how you can help. It makes life easier for you and patients get what they need quickly and efficiently.

Consider other perspectives

We all experience things differently. Put yourself in the patients' shoes... consider how they may feel as they come into the reception area. Continue to ask of yourself and others what is working well and what would make the experience even better.

Collaborate

The patient is looking for awareness and sensitivity. Work with them to become aware of their circumstances and to avoid saying something they may feel is insensitive.

Compromise

You won't always be able to give patients just what they're looking for but think about how you can facilitate their experience. By understanding their needs, you are in a great position to signpost to different groups and individuals or even apps that may be able to support them.

Celebrate

Share information and successes with the team. And don't forget to acknowledge yourself and your colleagues for what has gone well. Reflect on how your interactions have went and give yourself a pat on the back.

