

2026 Combined Pain Care Skills & Substance Use Disorder Training Agenda

Easy Communications Skills for Difficult Situations (with Pain & SUD cases)

Presented by: COL Jeremy Edwards, DO; Dr. Alison Wiesenthal
Offered: 19 August 2026; 1230-1530 PM ET
Location: National Union Building; Washington, DC

Description: This class will focus on providing learners with clear, objective and effective communications techniques that can be used across multiple scenarios in healthcare, including breaking bad news, difficult patient encounters, and complex care situations. Using a combination of didactic learning and standardized patients, this workshop will ensure that learners have the tools necessary to have clear and effective communication in any clinical situation.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. To review the incidence and impact of difficult or poor communication in the healthcare setting
2. To describe strategies that can be used to improve communication with others in difficult situations.
3. To demonstrate common pitfalls and mistakes made in communication
4. To allow learner practice skills with standardized patients in various medical scenarios.

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| 1230-1245 | Historic perspective on communication in healthcare |
| 1245-1315 | Review of basic communication skills |
| 1315-1345 | Standardized Patient Session #1 |
| 1345-1400 | -----BREAK----- |
| 1400-1430 | Review of more advanced communication skills for difficult conversations |
| 1430-1530 | Standardized Patient Session #2 |