

Never criticise a colleague in front of patients

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There will be times when a patient will relay you a history where you will think that another doctor's management or clinical decision to be baffling, inexplicable or plain wrong.

Be aware that there are malicious people who view doctors as a soft target for litigation. Don't let a careless comment ruin someone's year.

Although a certain degree of gossip within the medical fraternity is unavoidable, you should never directly criticise another doctor's management in front of a patient. Firstly, it may be you who are "wrong" in that you are not as familiar with the particular disease process as you think. Secondly, you do not know the full clinical context and the patient's version of events may be quite different to what really happened. Finally, we are all wise with the eye of hindsight – things are often much more difficult to manage at the time.

Just as you don't want to be slandered by a random doctor who works after you, you should not do the same.