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Intention of its development

Until very recent times, pharmacy education in Japan has placed a very biased emphasis on scientific curricula, but has neglected social studies that are very important for effectively communicating with patients, doctors, and other medical professionals. Students are well prepared for clinical pharmacy practice, however, increasing number of students lacked the objective of becoming well rounded pharmacists. Thus, fundamental qualification of pharmacists has been questioned, and we had to develop and propose a multimedia teaching material and programs for pharmacy students to communicate more effectively.

Constitution of the material

The material consists of 3 parts, (1) Overview, (2) Basic Skills and (3) In Practice (Figure 1). The "Overview" part includes the basic skills for communication and patient counseling, and the lists of References and the related Web links. In the "Basic Skills" part, the effective methods for good personal appearance, mental attitude and speaking in the clinical settings are shown. The "In Practice" part has the role-play scenario for the pharmacy practice in community pharmacy and home care settings. Students can learn how to deal with patients through many type of scene by active-movies (Figure 2).
Figure 1, Contents of the material

Figure 2, Practice scene with active-movie

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As the results of using this material, it was discovered that many pharmacy students indeed, lacked communication skills during practice, however after numerous discussions on the multimedia materials and the practice of interchanging role-play can greatly improve fundamental qualification of pharmacists.