

Module 5: Expectations of the Practitioners

As a consultant it is important to convey to the practitioner what is expected of them when signing up to be a practitioner with BioCertica. The role of a practitioner is, in short, to help clients understand and interpret their gene test results. They also help the clients with how to adjust aspects of their lifestyle according to their genetic make-up. This can be either for the purpose of decreasing their risk for any diseases or to embrace their genetic make-up to unlock their full potential in all aspects of life. Therefore, after the practitioners have completed the course, they will consult with clients regarding the results of their genetic tests in such a way that they are standing as a type of genetic counselor.

Characteristics required of the practitioner:

In this position of being a genetic counselor, there are a variety of characteristics that the practitioner should possess such as sensitivity, self-awareness, scientifically minded, optimistic, emotional intelligence and empathy. However, the three very important characteristics are compassion, critical-thinking skills and decision-making skills.

1. Compassion

Patients seek advice on family care or a serious illness, so genetic counselors must be sensitive and compassionate when communicating their findings. Compassion should still be maximally optimized at the business level, nor at any point should the patient feel a personal connection when communicating with a practitioner. Very often, due to the interpretation of the results, they can look for a "savior" in the counselor. In moments when the patient communicates his feelings about the findings, there will often be situations when they can mention other family members and emotional distress - you should listen, but immediately after that the practitioner navigates the rest of the communication and returns to the report and what he needs to explain.

Be there for the patient, but with clear boundaries.

2. Critical-thinking skills

Genetic counselors analyze laboratory findings to determine how best to advise a patient or family. They use their applied knowledge of genetics to assess inherited risks properly. The counselor / practitioner must not express his or her personal opinion or fall into the "trap of communicating" with patients. Patients often ask "what would you do", and the job of the counselor is to present all objective facts, to explain possibilities, potential approach, therapy

depending on the results, but not to manage the decision-making process, not even with a small hint. The decision on the next step should be made exclusively by the patient.

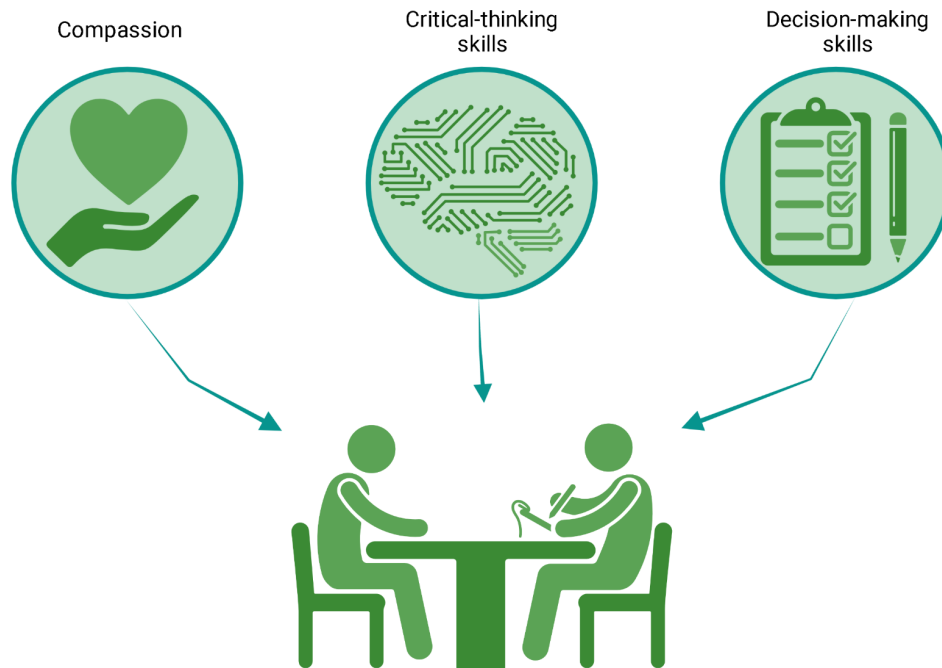
The decision is never made on the basis of a single genetic finding (diagnostic tests that can establish a final diagnosis based on the results are very rare). During the session, the practitioner presents the obtained results and presents the possible effect of these results on lifestyle, but to link the genetic results with the already existing clinical picture (so it is very important to take a detailed personal and family medical history).

During the session, monitor the patient's reactions and, if necessary, repeatedly mention that environmental factors have a great influence on the manifestation of the obtained risks - before starting the session, the practitioner must warn the client of the potential consequences that genetic counseling can have, both for himself and his family members, and once again receive confirmation from the client that he wants to face information about potential risks.

3. Decision-making skills

Genetic counselors must use their expertise and experience to determine how to disseminate their findings properly to their patients. The first and basic rule when presenting findings is to announce the results for which testing has been ordered (sporadic results can be obtained during genetic testing). In case of sporadic results due to ethics, it is necessary to obtain the patient's consent to report the sporadic result.

When communicating the results, practitioners must first communicate the detected variants that have clinical / vital significance. In the case of BioCertica results, the focus can only be on increased / decreased risk; the average score is not of great importance.



What is expected from the practitioner in terms of consultations:

- Practitioners are expected to thoroughly go through the client's results prior to the consultation and be fully prepared for the consultation with the client. We suggest the practitioner books out at least thirty minutes to an hour prior to the consultation for this purpose. Proper planning is essential beforehand and puts the practitioner in a position to help the client effectively, therefore they cannot leave preparation at the last minute.
- The consultation needs to include the following: a runthrough the full medical history of the client, explaining the generation and interpretation of the results, bringing the client's results together to paint the overall picture, and giving guidance on the most important individualized recommendations and lifestyle considerations. It is expected that the consultation should last at least one hour.
- Work on goal-setting with the client
- Determine what the main priority of the client is - why they wanted to have their DNA profile tested in the first place. They should focus the consultation around this.

- Practitioners should also make sure to identify the greatest risk of the client and also focus on counseling them on this. “Paint” the picture of the client’s results around this.
- Follow-up sessions will depend on the needs of the client and how much guidance they will need regarding the lifestyle (exercise- or diet plan) the practitioner will design for them (if and when applicable).
- Refer the client to an appropriate practitioner if the recommendations or programs that are needed or requested fall outside of the scope and expertise of the practitioner. We are a team and work together for the best of the client - their health, wellbeing, and happiness comes first.

Additionally, both you and the practitioner must be aware of the what the genetic tests are and what they are not.

BioCertica genetic tests are:



Confidential



Possibly emotional



Similar in family lines



For all ages



Potentially money-saving



Recommended by health care professionals

BioCertica genetic tests are not:



Paternity testing



Diagnostic



A guarantee against chronic disease



Answers for everything



Paid for by medical aids



A replacement for clinical care

The Ultimate Job of the Practitioners

Genetic results can only provide the clients with their relative risk for a trait and not the absolute risk for a trait. As a practitioner, the job is to paint the whole picture for the client. Genetics cannot be changed but lifestyle can. BioCertica provides a tool to a practitioner to maximize the help the practitioner can provide to their clients. We do our best to give as much information regarding the heritability of each trait and from here the practitioner must judge how much a client's lifestyle is influencing their health and is therefore in the client's control and how much is in their DNA and beyond their control.

Let us think of this scenario, you receive the results from your BioCertica DNA kit and see that you have a high relative risk of a cardiovascular disease. Empowered with this knowledge, you can re-asses your lifestyle. An unhealthy lifestyle in combination with a high relative risk can drastically increase your absolute risk of developing the disease. However, making important lifestyle changes with the aid of our trained practitioners can significantly lower your absolute risk.

