Be unfailingly, carefully polite and respectful – e.g. please, thank you.

Any lack of respect, real or unwittingly implied at these moments can turn a flashpoint into a crisis.
Give attention, 
**listen**, hear the 
request and the 
**reasons** and **feelings** 
that lie behind them.

Seek a complete understanding, 
check out that understanding with the 
person, if needed. Don’t ignore the request 
or pretend you haven’t heard it.
First reflex should be saying ‘yes’, not ‘no’. Do you really need to say ‘no’? Can you justify saying ‘no’?

Is this something that with a bit of effort or work or checking, you could say ‘yes’ or at least a partial ‘yes’ to?
If you are not in a position to make a decision about a patient’s request, agree to refer the matter on to someone who can.

Agree this with the patient, and agree a time frame by which they should hear back with the outcome. Then make sure it happens.
Explain in detail and with good reasons why you cannot give patients exactly what they want.
Make no promises that you can’t keep.

If you do make promises or commitments, make sure that they are fulfilled, or go back and explain why they can’t be. Don’t forget!
Explain to the patient how they can appeal or complain about any decision.

Offer to assist them with doing that if they wish.
Admit **fallibility** when you **ask** a patient to **stop** doing something.

Agree that you may be wrong, or that the constraints and rules might be stupid.
Seek to understand behaviour and what need it expresses.

Offer to meet that need in a different way.
Be flexible.

It isn’t always necessary for an individual to do exactly what you ask them to do.