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DISCLOSURES

• Novartis
  Participation in Advisory Board

• Co-investigator Clinical Trials
  NCIC, Roche, Pfizer, Novartis, BMS, Merck, CCTG
BY THE END OF THIS PRESENTATION YOU WILL:

• Recognize and anticipate difficult communication situations

• Understand the SPIKES protocol to deliver serious news to patients

• Understand the NURSE protocol to recognize and respond to strong emotions
DISCUSSING SERIOUS NEWS
A THERAPEUTIC DIALOGUE

For the patient

adjustment to illness
adherence to treatment
satisfaction with care
DISCUSSING SERIOUS NEWS
A THERAPEUTIC DIALOGUE

For the physician

Less stress and burnout

Greater enjoyment of work
42 million individuals with at least one chronic condition and one activity of daily living (ADL) need.¹

Fewer than one-third (29%) of physicians report ever having had any formal training in communication about goals of care.²

Nearly half (46%) say they are unsure about what to say.³

²,³ National Survey conducted by The John A. Hartford Foundation, California Health Care Foundation (CHCF), and Cambia Health Foundation, 2016
Patients want the truth about prognosis.

You will not harm your patient by talking about end-of-life issues.

Anxiety is normal for both patient and clinician during these discussions.

Patients have goals and priorities besides living longer; learning about them empowers you to provide better care.

Giving patients an opportunity to express fears and worries is therapeutic.
Advance Care Planning Terminology
“early planning, not early decisions”

Prognosis: 1-2 Years
- 18+, Healthy
  - Identify Health Care Proxy (HCP)
  - Conversation about care preferences
- Seriously Ill
  - Diagnosis of Serious or Chronic Illness(es)
  - Progression of Serious or Chronic Illness(es)
  - Have Serious Illness Conversation
- Crises & Decline
  - Condition worsening
  - Revisit Serious Illness Conversation
  - Goals of Care Discussion (If clinical decision)
- End of Life
  - Poor Prognosis
  - Revisit Serious Illness Conversation / Goals of Care Discussion
  - MOLST / POLST

Advance Care Planning = Planning in Advance of Serious Illness

Serious Illness Care Conversation = Planning in the context of progression of serious illness

Goals of Care Discussion = Decision making in context of clinical progression / crisis / poor prognosis
PATIENT-CENTRED COMMUNICATION

‘communication that invites and encourages the patient to participate and negotiate in decision-making regarding their own care’

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS?
WHAT IS “BAD NEWS”? 

News that alters view of future in a negative way

How bad?

Depends on gap between expectation and reality
WHEN IS “BAD NEWS”? TRANSITIONAL MILESTONES IN ONCOLOGY

Early

- Awaiting diagnosis
- Consultation: prognosis, treatment

Advanced

- Newly diagnosed metastases
  - Change in therapy
  - Stopping active anti-cancer Rx
SPIKES
SIX STEP S-P-I-K-E-S PROTOCOL

SET UP
get the physical setting right

PERCEPTION
what does patient understand

EMOTION
respond N-U-R-S-E

SUMMARIZE
written outline  next step

SET UP

Is this a good time to talk?

Are the right people there?

Make time

or

set limits on what you can deliver
SIX STEP S-P-I-K-E-S PROTOCOL

**SET UP**
get the physical setting right

**PERCEPTION**
what does patient understand

**INVITATION**
readiness amount of info

**KNOWLEDGE**
disclose the news

**EMOTION**
respond N-U-R-S-E

**SUMMARIZE**
written outline next step
PERCEPTION

Understand level of sophistication

Understand emotional state

Find out how serious the patient thinks it is
What have you been thinking about this symptom?

What do you understand about the reason we did these tests?

What have the doctors told you?

What did you think they meant?
SIX STEP S-P-I-K-E-S PROTOCOL

SET UP get the physical setting right

PERCEPTION

INVITATION readiness and amount of info

EMOTION respond N-U-R-S-E

SUMMARIZE written outline next step
Are you ready to talk about this?

Some patients want me to cover every medical detail and other only want the big picture...what would you prefer now?
SIX STEP S-P-I-K-E-S PROTOCOL

SET UP  get the physical setting right
PERCEPTION  what does patient understand
KNOWLEDGE  disclose the news
EMOTION  respond N-U-R-S-E
SUMMARIZE  written outline  next step
KNOWLEDGE

Share the information

Well, the situation appears to be more serious...

Be straightforward

Your back pain appears to be caused by cancer in the bone

Check in to determine understanding

I want to stop here and check to see if you have any questions, or if I need to clarify or go over the information again.

Small steps
SIX STEP S-P-I-K-E-S PROTOCOL

SET UP  get the physical setting right
PERCEPTION  what does patient understand
INVITATION  amount of info
KNOWLEDGE  disclose the news
EMOTION  respond N-U-R-S-E
SUMMARIZE  written outline  next step
TWO TRACKS

Cognitive
Logical  methodical

Emotional
Fast  overwhelming
EMOTIONS DERAIL COGNITION

Stop delivering information when emotions are high

Offer an empathic response instead
PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES...
N-U-R-S-E

**N**ame  *it seems like you are frustrated*

**U**nderstand  *This must be very difficult for you to hear*

**R**espect (praise)  *You are doing your best…*

**S**upport  *“I wish” statements*

**E**xplore  *Tell me more*
SIX STEP S-P-I-K-E-S PROTOCOL

**SET UP**  
get the physical setting right

**PERCEPTION**  
what does patient understand

**SUMMARIZE**  
written outline  next step

**EMOTION**  
respond N-U-R-S-E

**SUMMARIZE**  
written outline  next step
SUMMARIZE

Summarize and make a concrete plan

Ensure clarity:
Are there any other questions you’d like to ask?

Be explicit about next contact
AUTHENTICITY

**Understand** the person, family, situation

**Respect** that accepting the truth may be too difficult psychologically

Give them time to **explore** their feelings
DISCUSSING SERIOUS NEWS

SUMMARY

a therapeutic dialogue

techniques can be learned and mastered

track emotional data

respond with empathic statements
EXPLORING GOALS OF CARE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONVERSATION FLOW</th>
<th>PATIENT-TESTED LANGUAGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Set up the conversation</strong></td>
<td>“I’d like to talk about what is ahead with your illness and do some thinking in advance about what is important to you so that I can make sure we provide you with the care you want — <em>is this okay?</em>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Introduce purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Prepare for future decisions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· Ask permission</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **2. Assess understanding and preferences** | “What is your *understanding* now of where you are with your illness?”  
“How much information about what is likely to be ahead with your illness would you like from me?” |
| **3. Share prognosis**    | “I want to share with you my *understanding* of where things are with your illness...”  
Uncertain: “It can be difficult to predict what will happen with your illness. I *hope* you will continue to live well for a long time but I’m *worried* that you could get sick quickly, and I think it is important to prepare for that possibility.”  
OR  
Time: “I wish we were not in this situation, but I am *worried* that time may be as short as ___ (express as a range, e.g. days to weeks, weeks to months, months to a year).”  
OR  
Function: “I *hope* that this is not the case, but I’m *worried* that this may be as strong as you will feel, and things are likely to get more difficult.” |
| · Share prognosis         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Frame as a “wish...worry”, “hope...worry” statement |                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| · Allow silence, explore emotion |                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| **4. Explore key topics** | “What are your most important goals if your health situation worsens?”  
“What are your biggest *fears and worries* about the future with your health?”  
“What gives you *strength* as you think about the future with your illness?”  
“What abilities are so critical to your life that you can’t imagine living without them?”  
“If you become sicker, how much are you willing to go through for the possibility of gaining more time?”  
“How much does your family know about your priorities and wishes?” |
| · Goals                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Fears and worries       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Sources of strength     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Critical abilities      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Tradeoffs               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Family                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| **5. Close the conversation** | “I’ve heard you say that ___ is really important to you. Keeping that in mind, and what we know about your illness, I recommend that we ___. This will help us make sure that your treatment plans reflect what’s important to you.”  
“How does this plan seem to you?”  
“I will do everything I can to help you through this.” |
| · Summarize               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Make a recommendation   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Check in with patient   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| · Affirm commitment       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| **6. Document your conversation** |                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
SHARE PROGNOSIS

• Tailor information to patient preference
• Frame as “wish…worry” or “hope…worry”
• Allow silence, explore emotion

• I hope that I am wrong, but I’m worried that time may be short
• I wish things would improve, but I am worried that this may be as strong as you feel
“HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE DOC?”

• Ask why (always be curious)
  • If I could tell you exactly when the time may come, how would you use that information?

• Try not to talk in absolutes
  • Hours to days
  • Days to weeks
  • Weeks to months
  • Months to years
EXPLORE KEY TOPICS

• Goals
• Fears and worries
• Sources of strength
• Critical abilities
• Tradeoffs
• Family

• What are your most important goals if your health situation worsens?
• What are your biggest fears and worries about the future with your health?
• What gives you strength as you think about the future with your illness?
• What abilities are so critical to your life that you cannot imagine living without them?
• If you become sicker, how much are you willing to go through for the possibility of gaining more time?
• How much does your family know about your priorities and wishes?
DOCUMENT THE CONVERSATION

• Most CMPA claims are due to poor communication
• Documenting clearly helps patient care and serves as record
OTHER REFERENCES

Baile, Buckman, Lenzi, et al


The End!

**** Back, Arnold and Tulsky

Mastering Communication with Seriously Ill Patients: Balancing Honesty with Empathy and Hope; 2009

Buckman, R

Practical Plans for Difficult Conversations in Medicine: Strategies that Work in Breaking Bad News, 2010