A structure for teaching
NFR decision-making

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Treated cardiac arrest survival

~100% with coronary angiography
~ 70% for VF in CCU after myocardial infarct
~ 15-20% for general hospital patient
< 5% for advanced illness - cancer, dementia etc
Treated cardiac arrest survival

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~ 70% for VF in CCU after myocardial infarct
~ 15-20% for general hospital patient
< 5% for advanced illness - cancer, dementia etc

~ 30-50% of these survivors will have further impairment
• .....a patient could experience very different resuscitation treatment (and potentially a different outcome) depending on the views of their clinical team as to how decisions should be made.

• It appears that doctors might benefit from support or training to improve communication with patients and families about resuscitation to provide greater consistency in this aspect of patient care.

Features of a CPR decision

Decision about:

- Life-and-death
  - Or life worse than death
- Good dying and bad dying

....For which trust is essential

Hayes B. J Bioethical Inquiry. 2010
Prelude to discussing CPR

- Recognition of moral difference
- Establishing patient’s wish for information
- Establish knowledge of the patient’s medical condition / ACP
- Establish trust
- Prepare to break-bad-news
Pre-existing knowledge of CPR

Unconscious? Not breathing? Start the…

1. Call 000 [triple zero]
2. Open the airway
3. Pump the chest
4. Breathe mouth-to-mouth

Automated External Defibrillator (AED) (if available)

Any CPR is better than no CPR

Finally....

- Assessing which one of four clinical categories apply
Would the patient survive CPR?

NO

Dying patient
- Discuss good dying

Medically unwell - not imminently dying
- Discuss why CPR not being offered

Possibly YES

Very poor outcome likely from CPR
- Discuss why CPR may be inappropriate but accept opposite view

Uncertain outcome from CPR
- Discuss to obtain informed decision
CPR decisions are both technical & moral

Q 1: Would the patient survive CPR?

Technical assessment and judgement

NO

Possibly YES

Q 2: What are the ethical implications of CPR / no CPR?
Would the patient survive CPR?

- NO
- Possibly YES

Deliberative discussion

Dying patient

Medically unwell - not imminently dying
Would the patient survive CPR?

- **NO**
- **Possibly YES**

**Interpretative discussion**

- Very poor outcome likely from CPR
- Uncertain outcome from CPR

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Emanuel & Emanuel. JAMA, 1992
NO

Dying patient

- Medically unwell - not imminently dying

Discuss why CPR not being offered

Possibly YES

- Very poor outcome likely from CPR

Discuss why CPR may be inappropriate but accept opposite view

Uncertain outcome from CPR

Discuss to obtain informed decision

Discussion

- Good dying

Disagreement

- Work to increase trust
- Provide CPR or refuse?
NO

Dying patient

Discuss good dying

Medically unwell - not imminently dying

Discuss why CPR not being offered

Possibly YES

Very poor outcome likely from CPR

Discuss why CPR may be inappropriate but accept opposite view

Uncertain outcome from CPR

Discuss to obtain informed decision

Discussion

• Good or bad dying; not life

Disagreement

• As for dying patient
Discuss good dying

- Risks – bad dying or bad life
- Sanctity-of-life v Quality-of-life

Patient – accept wishes
Family - determine moral reasoning

Discussion

Disagreement

Dying patient

Medically unwell - not imminently dying

- Discuss why CPR not being offered

Very poor outcome likely from CPR

- Discuss why CPR may be inappropriate but accept opposite view

Uncertain outcome from CPR

Discuss to obtain informed decision

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NO

Dying patient

Discuss good dying

Medically unwell - not imminently dying

Discuss why CPR not being offered

Very poor outcome likely from CPR

Discuss why CPR may be inappropriate but accept opposite view

Possibly YES

Uncertain outcome from CPR

Discuss to obtain informed decision

Discussion

• Benefits and harms of CPR

Disagreement

• N/A
Would the patient survive CPR?

NO
- Dying patient
  - Discuss good dying

Possibly YES
- Medically unwell - not imminently dying
  - Discuss why CPR not being offered
- Very poor outcome likely from CPR
  - Discuss why CPR may be inappropriate but accept opposite view
- Uncertain outcome from CPR
  - Discuss to obtain informed decision
Would the patient respond to the treatment?

**NO**
- Dying patient
  - Discuss good dying
- Medically unwell - not imminently dying
  - Discuss why the treatment not being offered

**Possibly YES**
- Very poor outcome likely from the treatment
  - Discuss why the treatment may be inappropriate but accept opposite view
- Uncertain outcome from the treatment
  - Discuss to obtain informed decision
References:


