OVERVIEW OF THE NURSES’ ROLE

The 4 Cs: Key Roles for Nurses in Communication about Prognosis, Goals of Care, and Palliative Care

Convening: Making sure multidisciplinary family-clinician communication occurs

Checking: • Identifying family needs for information
  • Ensuring that families clearly receive desired information
  • Ensuring that clinicians understand family perspectives

Caring: Naming emotions and responding to feelings

Continuing: Following up after discussions to clarify and reinforce information and provide support

3 Conversations: Implementing the 4 Cs in Practice

Nurse-Family Conversation
• Elicit family needs, understanding of prognosis
• Elicit patient values, goals, preferences
• Suggest plan to address family needs

Family Conference: Nurse’s Role
• Ensure key topics are discussed
• Provide emotional support
• Ensure family understands information
• Encourage discussion of patient preferences

Nurse-Physician Conversation
• Share family understanding of prognosis
• Elicit physician perspective on prognosis
• Share patient values, goals, preferences
• Develop plan to address family needs

After Krimshtein et al J Palliat Med 2011

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**CORE SKILLS: TOOLS FOR NAVIGATING FAMILY & PHYSICIAN CONVERSATIONS**

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<th>Skill</th>
<th>Function</th>
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| Open-ended questions   | Eliciting another person’s perspective | “What do you understand about your husband’s illness?”  
“Dr. Taylor, how have your discussions been with the Jones family?” |
| Reflection statements  | Show that you want to understand another person’s perspective | “It sounds like this has been a really stressful week for you.”  
“You’re re worried she may not be able to care for herself after this - is that right?” |
| Tell me more           | Learn more about another’s perspective | “Tell me more about what your mom liked to do before she got sick.”  
“Doctor, could you say more about the care she might need after discharge?” |
| NURSE                  | Empathy in response to expressions of emotion | Family: “It’s been a very hard week.”  
Nurse: Name: “You sound frustrated.”  
   Understand: “I can only imagine how hard this is.”  
   Respect: “I really respect how much you’ve been here at his side.”  
   Support: “We’re here to help you through this.”  
   Explore: “What’s been the hardest part?” |
| Ask-Tell-Ask           | Get permission to present information  
Present information clearly  
Check understanding or agreement | Family: “What do you think – is she going to make it?”  
Nurse (Ask): “That’s an important question. I’d be happy to discuss it. First, may I ask you what your sense of things is?”  
Family: “She seems more peaceful today – maybe that’s a good thing?”  
Nurse (Tell): “I also see her being more sleepy - I’m worried it’s because we’ve had to increase the medications so she is more sedated.”  
Nurse (Ask): “I think it would be important for us to discuss your daughter’s status with her doctors. Would it be ok if I arranged a time later today?”  
Family: “Yes – that would be good I think.” |
| Hope / worry statements| Honestly present information while aligning with family/doctor | “We’re hoping that she gets stronger too. We’re also worried that her kidneys are showing signs of worsening.” |