NEGOTIATING CONFLICT IN END OF LIFE DISCUSSIONS

RM Arnold1 1University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

Background Conflicts, particularly between health care providers and families regarding end of life care are common.
Aim To provide a structured way to think about what causes these conflicts and the communication skills one might use to negotiate conflicts over treatment for seriously ill patients.
Results/Discussion To help structure, health providers’ thinking about these cases, a question, “Why is this loving and caring family making a decision that you think is unreasonable?” will be discussed. The talk with focus on the psychology and business literature on conflicts to posit three reasons for why conflicts occur: misunderstandings over what is happening; inattention to the feelings associated with these conflicts and rigid beliefs about one’s identity. A variety of communication skills – ranging from ASK-TELL-ASK, to “rolling with resistance” to responding empathically to emotions will be discussed to help negotiate these conflicts.
Conclusion A specific framework can help health care providers negotiate conflict with families over care at the end of life.