Introduction
A compelling body of research links clinician-patient communication with important outcomes in end-of-life care. As a result, educational programs on providing bad news, advance directives, and terminal care are now widely available. There is another task that is equally challenging but less often addressed: conversations when treatment fails to cure or control disease, and goals of care must be revised. A particularly poignant challenge at these transitions to palliative care is balancing honest disclosure with realistic hope. For example, nearly 20% of oncologists have low self-rated competence with these conversations, and find them to be the least satisfying aspect of their work.

Educational research has demonstrated that good communication is not a personality trait or “bedside manner,” but rather a set of specific skills that can be identified, analyzed, taught, and learned. Effective skills-based training involves presenting the skills in a conceptual model that facilitates recall, demonstrating the skills, and then “hands-on” practice in small groups with feedback, followed by periodic review and application.

The Challenge
Communication skills become habitual, and habits are difficult to break. Simply telling physicians what they “ought” to do is ineffective. The Care Not Cure workshop was developed to enable physicians and their medical teams to assess their own communication habits, modify those that are not effective, and integrate new, more effective approaches.

Communication skills at transitions to palliative care operate in a context of values and feelings toward suffering, death, and the role of medicine. For example, oncologists with low self-rated communication skills are more likely to experience a patient death as a personal failure. This can contribute to emotional exhaustion, apathy, and burnout. The Care Not Cure workshop provides time for clinicians to reflect on the impact these issues can have on their communication with patients.

The Program
Care Not Cure: Dialogues at the Transition consists of a series of highly interactive activities that can be conducted in a half-day (in divided segments as necessary). It is designed primarily for oncologists and their medical teams, but clinicians from other specialties, and interdisciplinary practice groups, have also found it useful.

Objectives
By the end of the workshop the workshop participants will:
Identify communication barriers when treatment fails to cure or control disease.
Describe and practice specific skills to overcome these barriers
Develop an effective method of relating to patients in transitions to palliative care.

Content
The workshop alternates brief didactic presentations with increasingly interactive, case-based exercises and discussions. The didactics focus on specific skills drawn from the cancer communication literature, and a conceptual model that parallels the tasks of patient care:

- RELATE to the patient: Elicit concerns and preferences for information, decisions
- REVIEW information: Achieve a shared understanding of data and its meaning
- REVISE treatment: Re-define and expand the goals and methods of care
- REFLECT on your approach: Your roles, resources, and rewards at transitions

Process
The workshop begins by asking participants to identify key communication tasks during transitions to palliative care, and to describe what “works” and “doesn’t work” for them. Participants work with video cases to quickly analyze and generate alternatives to the behaviors witnessed on the videotapes. The focus is on learning from colleagues and on transferring the skills into the practice setting. In the final exercise, participants consider what they are accountable for, and to whom, in doing this work and where they find their own resources and rewards. The workshop materials include a workbook with an extensive annotated bibliography and follow-up exercises.

Faculty
The faculty for Care Not Cure: Dialogues at the Transition is drawn from the faculty of the Institute for Healthcare Communication. All faculty members are physicians or behavioral scientists with extensive experience as teachers and clinicians. All faculty members have completed an extensive faculty development program sponsored by the Institute and have attended at least five days of training before they are certified to teach Care Not Cure: Dialogues at the Transition.

We invite individuals to contact the Institute and inquire about our faculty development program. Our goal is to train individuals to present the workshop, to deepen their own communication skills, to coach their colleagues, and to explore ways to advocate for greater attention to this topic at their home institutions.

CME
The Institute for Healthcare Communication takes responsibility for the content quality and integrity of this Continuing Education (CE) activity. The Institute for Healthcare Communication is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians. The half-day version of this workshop is designated by the Institute for Healthcare Communication, Inc. as a continuing medical education activity meeting the criteria for 4 hours in Category 1 of the Physician’s Recognition Award of the American Medical
Association. The Institute for Healthcare Communication is accredited by the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) to provide prescribed credit for continuing medical education programs. The half-day version of the workshop has been reviewed and is acceptable for up to 3.5-7.0 Prescribed credit hours by the American Academy of Family Physicians. The Institute for Healthcare Communication is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. The half-day program provides 4.2-8.4 contact hours for nurses.

Costs
The mission of the Institute for Healthcare Communication is to enhance health outcomes through education, research, and advocacy. Because of its grants from Bayer HealthCare Corporation, the Institute is able to keep fees to a minimum to advance this mission.

The Institute
The Institute for Healthcare Communication is a private operating foundation. The Institute is funded through grants and fees from a variety of organizations. The Institute receives annual grants from Bayer HealthCare Corporation to support its efforts.

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