

Palliative Care: An Interdisciplinary Approach for Healthcare Professionals

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**The presenter has no conflicts of
interest to disclose.**

Objectives

- Identify the primary tenets of palliative care
- Explain the value of an interdisciplinary team (IDT) approach to meet the needs of palliative care patients and their families
- Recognize developmental aspects of an IDT
- Distinguish the challenges of an IDT approach
 - Conflict resolution

CASE

- Mr. C. is a 66 year old male with a patient medical history significant for advanced nonischemic cardiomyopathy (NICM), diabetes mellitus (DM), hypertension (HTN), who has been admitted to Yale-New Haven Hospital 6 times in the last 5 months for congestive heart failure (CHF) exacerbation.
- During this hospitalization, it is determined that he will likely need an left ventricular assist device (LVAD) placed to survive (he is not a transplant candidate).
- He was told that if he survives the initial surgery and post-op period, he has a 60% chance of survival over the next 2 years.

CASE Continues...

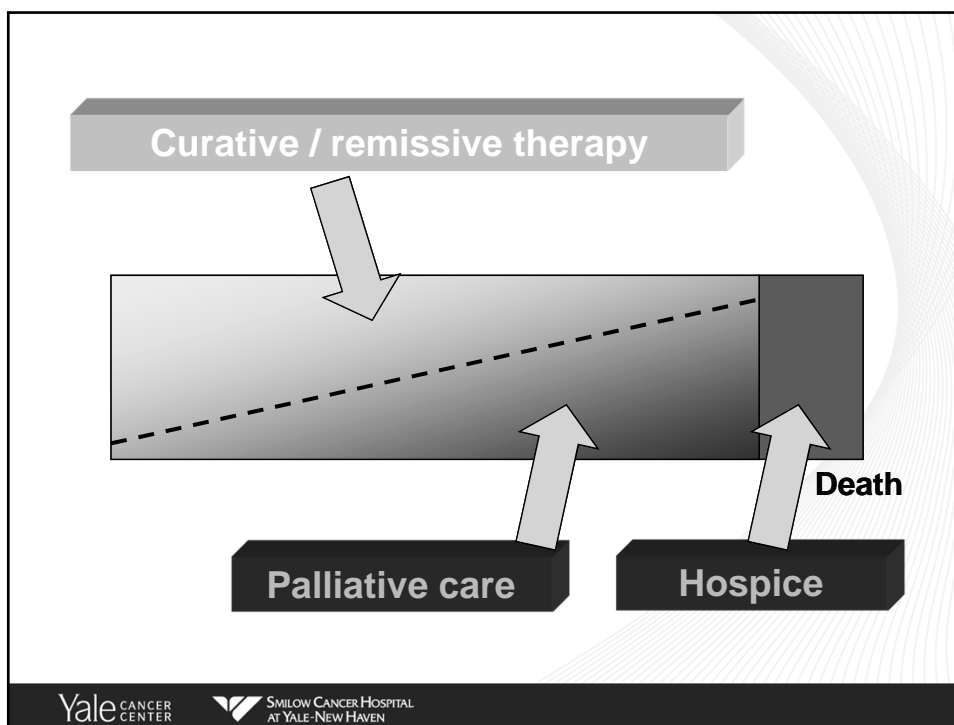
- At baseline, he is dependent for all of his IADLs and needs assistance with ambulation and getting dressed.
- His wife is anxious about his future care needs and expresses grief and anger regarding his treatment of her in the past (history of verbal abuse).

CASE continues...

- Patient's wife states she worries about the family finances given she will not likely be able to work after his surgery.
- Nurses overhear the patient asking, "Why is this happening to me? What have I done to deserve this?"

Is Mr. C. a palliative care patient?

How is palliative care defined?



Center for the Advancement of Palliative Care (CAPC)

- Palliative care is **specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses**. This type of care is focused on providing patients with relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress of a serious illness - whatever the diagnosis.
- **The goal is to improve quality of life** for both the *patient and the family*. Palliative care is provided by a **team** of doctors, nurses, and other specialists who work with a patient's other doctors to provide an **extra layer of support**. Palliative care is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and can be provided together with curative treatment.

Palliative care needs of Mr. C.

- Physical symptom management
 - Pain, anxiety, dyspnea
- Guidance with difficult decision making about goals of care
- Emotional support for patient and wife
- Financial support
- Spiritual support of wife
 - “Why is this happening to me?”

Role of Core IDT

- Social worker: Emotional, social, and financial support
 - Social worker learned more about the support system available to both patient and his wife
 - Counseled the wife regarding the risk of caregiver burden
 - Identified community resources for a grant and initiated a referral to a home health agency

Role of full core IDT

- Nurses/Advanced Practice Nurses/Physicians/Physicians Assistants: Physical symptom assessment and support
 - Low dose opioid was suggested for dyspnea and pain
 - Constipation was aggressively managed with senna and docusate (and one enema)

Role of IDT continued

- Chaplain: Spiritual assessment and support
 - Chaplain met with both patient and his wife individually
 - Full spiritual history
 - Spent significant time listening to patient's story, and questions about "why is this happening to me?"

Role of IDT continued

- Psychologist/Psychiatry/Social Work: Emotional assessment and support
 - Psychologist met with patient to assess for depression and anxiety
 - Provided brief cognitive behavioral therapy interventions
 - Recommended an anti-depressant for anxiety
 - Offered supportive counseling for patient's wife

Interdisciplinary team of support



Characteristics of high performing teams

- Clear goals
- Clear customer standards
- Roles are understood and agreed upon
- Good team organization
- Decision making process clear
- Set objective performance measures
- Ability to change goals

CAPC, 2010 and Curphy, G. The Rocket Model. 2012

Characteristics of low performing teams

- Cautious, guarded communication
- Failure to share information
- Unclear or unrealistic goal/role
- Low team commitment
- Over-reliance on one/few people
- Competition
- Lack of feedback
- Low trust/conflict
- Failure to utilize all member talents

CAPC, 2010 and Curphy, G. The Rocket Model. 2012

Developmental Phases of an Interdisciplinary Team

- Phase 1: Forming
- Phase 2: Norming
- Phase 3: Confrontation (“storming”)

Drinka, TJK. *Educ. Gerontol.* 1994

Background: Our team's story

- Rapid expansion of team of physician and 2 Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to full interdisciplinary team that included:
 - 3 additional physicians
 - Social worker
 - Chaplain
 - 1 additional APRN
 - 1 Physician Assistant (PA)
 - Practice nurse
 - Bereavement coordinator
- All committed to high standard of patient care, however
 - Different backgrounds/conflict resolution approaches

Background: Our Team's Story

- We recognized “brewing tensions”
 - Boundaries, role expectations, communication, care approach
- All committed to long term team stability and health
- Engaged consultants from the Institute for Excellence, a part of Yale-New Haven Health System
- Work in progress: Conflict Evolution

Exercise 1: Mission Statement

Core Team Values
What is most important to you
professionally?

Shaping a Vision

Identifies a view of the future state that is:

- Customer focused
- Not just one person's dream
- Challenging
- Evolving, not static
- Easy to understand
- Behavioral and actionable

Shaping a Vision

Drafting a Vision: Designate scribe/facilitator

- Imagine it is two years from now and the Palliative Care Team has been successful working on their top goals
- Find words to describe what you would see, hear, and feel as you observe members functioning in this new, changed state
- Using the words, write a fifteen-word (or less) vision statement
- Be ready to share your vision statement with the other groups

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Palliative Care Team Core Values

Goal: Create a set of core values that reflect what is important to us.

Palliative Care Team Core Values

Values are:

- A shorthand way of describing our individual and collective motivations. Together with beliefs, they are the causal factors that drive our decision-making.
- They help to define the standards by which we will hold ourselves and each other accountable.

Self-reflection exercise:

What are examples of core values of your team?

Palliative Care Team Vision

A collaborative, interdisciplinary team leading and modeling excellence through compassion, resilience, innovation, patient care, education, and research.

Core Values

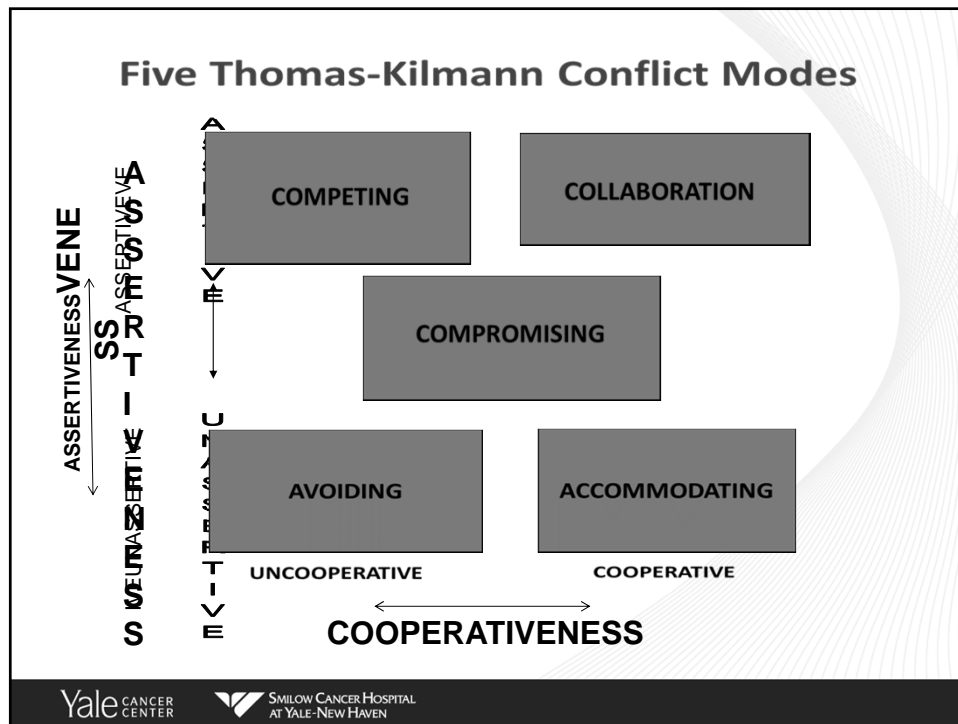
- Compassion
- Trust and Integrity
- Honesty and Respect

Exercise 2: Conflict Modes

Sources of Conflict

Conflicts arise from unresolved differences





Competing “Might Makes Right”

Assertive and Uncooperative

- Relationships are of minor importance - seeks to achieve their goals at all cost
- Not concerned with the needs of others
- Does not care if others like or accept them – they want to win
- Tries to win their position by attacking, overpowering, overwhelming, or intimidating

Collaboration
“Two heads are better than one”

Assertive and cooperative



- Finds solution to satisfy both parties
- Goals and relationship are equally important
- Finds alternatives
- Explores to find new insights

Compromising
“Split the Difference”

Intermediate in Assertiveness and
Cooperativeness

- Both sides give up a part of their goals
- Seeks resolution in which both sides gain something – the middle ground between two extreme positions
- Finds agreement for the common good

Avoiding “Leave Well Enough Alone”

Unassertive and Uncooperative

- Does not pursue his/her own concerns or those of others
- Does not address conflict
- Might take the form of sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation

Accommodating Kill Your Enemies with Kindness

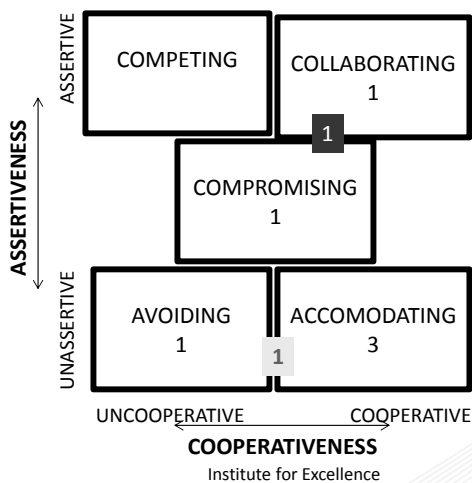
Unassertive and Cooperative

- Wants to be liked and accepted
- Gives up goals to preserve relationships
- Wants peace and harmony

Thomas Kilmann Conflict Self Reflection Exercise

- What is your #1 style?
- What is your least preferred style?
- Any surprises?

TKI Team Summary



Enhancing Team Performance

- What value does your style bring to the team?
- What are the possible limitations of your style?
- How does your style impact how you handle conflict with your team members?
- What are some of the ways your team can communicate more effectively and resolve conflicts?

Exercise 3:

The group process work
continues...

Expectations

Expectations

- Role as team member
- Role within “home” department
 - Scope of care expectations
 - Time expectations
 - Communication expectations
 - Boundaries expectations

Goals

- Identify and agree upon group goals for the team
- Commit to a written, clear plan for action to continue to grow as a team
- Identification of goals helps clarify expectations/allows us to reflect progress

Individual Goals

- What are my personal goals, hopes, departmental goals
- What are my personal priorities?
- Do my personal goals interface with team goals and priorities; can team support them?

Team “Success”

- Completion of tasks, reaching goals
- Team has developed a social relationship that helps them work together well
- Work is personally rewarding because of the social, learning, and skills development which comes as a result of group participation

Hackman, 1987

Team Evolution: Learning to Love Conflict

- Establish mission and shared vision
- Identify styles of managing conflict
- Articulate roles and expectations of members
- Establish team goals:
clarify team expectations and accountability

Final thoughts

- A full IDT is needed to comprehensively address the palliative care needs of seriously ill patients and their families.
 - There is need for physical, spiritual, emotional, and psycho-social support.
- Given the diverse backgrounds of IDT members, conflict is expected.
 - Conflict can be an important tool to develop a healthy and effective team.

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