The Death Talk: 
Breaking the News to Patients

Presented By: 
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The Death Talk: A comfortable, fun conversation about, well, you know...

- You’re nervous talking about death
- Someone made you come
- This topic looked the most interesting
READY FIRE AIM!
1. Patients NEED an advocate to make sure their rights are protected.

2. The tone of the first conversation set the tone of their entire hospice experience.

What I learned:
We must be an advocate for the patient, while showing compassion to his or her family, and work together to change
Advocate

One who speaks on behalf of another. Offer support or to take ones place.

"I have come to offer my support on behalf of the king"

"Why have you come?" - "I have come to reason with you on the whole civil rights scenario"

"You are just an messengerboy, an advocate, I refuse to listen till he gains the guts to speak to me himself!

#lawyer #ally #diplomat #diplomatic #companion

But why???
Hospice Patient

To die with dignity
To have their end-of-life wishes honored
Access to palliative care

Compassionate Care

Nurse care

Love, respect, personalized, local, calm, honor, peace, soul, support, journey, servant, understanding, help, professionalism, spirit, family, passion, comfort
Hospice Patient & Family

To make an informed decision
Our failure is not found in our lack of knowledge but rather our inability to use that information to advocate for patients.
1. Tell the truth
2. Don’t leave out the “bad” news
3. Tone Matters
4. Call a duck a duck
What I learned:

1. Patients NEED an advocate to make sure their rights are protected.

2. The tone of the first conversation set the tone of their entire hospice experience.
Com·pas·sion [kuhm-pash-uhn]

noun : a feeling of deep sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.
Pity

Sympathy

Selfish
Empathy

noun

the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Sympathy

noun

1. feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune. "they had great sympathy for the flood victims"

Compassion [kuhm-pash-uhhn]

noun: a feeling of deep sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.
Empathy:

It requires for us to connect to vulnerable place within us: a personal experience with deep and raw emotion.

This is where selfishness is abandoned and compassion begins...
Do’s & Don’ts

1. Accept how they feel
2. Assure it’s okay
3. Listen (to hear not to respond)
4. Make it personal

1. Don’t Run
2. Don’t Fix
3. You DO NOT have to talk!
So let’s practice...
1. Advocate

2. Show compassion

3. Educate
WHEN YOU WANNA THROAT PUNCH A DOCTOR FOR TELLING A DYING PATIENT THEY DON'T NEED HOSPICE

BUT YOU WANNA KEEP YOUR JOB