

Format For A Patient Care Conference

(Family conference for patients who lack decision-making capacity with the patient's medical power of attorney representative or health care surrogate and others the representative/surrogate asks to attend)

1. **Introduce meeting participants** - if you did not get a chance to introduce yourselves to the patient/family before the meeting, explain the role of the ethics committee, give the family a chance to bring someone for support (clergy), and ask questions - do so at the beginning of the meeting. Everyone introduces themselves and their role. (Make sure someone grabs a box of tissues to bring into the meeting.)
2. The team provides **an update on the patient's medical condition** (physicians, nurses, therapists). Input from the bedside nurse is very helpful to understand the patient's functional level, degree of pain and suffering, and expressed wishes.
3. The **family** is given the opportunity to **ask questions** about the medical condition and to **talk about their concerns and values**.
4. Identification of **patient's values and preferences**, if known.
5. The team presents **possible options**.
6. If the patient's values and preferences are known, **select option that the patient would want**.
7. If patient's values and preferences are unknown, **discuss the patient's best interests**.
8. If the patient's interests are unclear, do a **time-limited trial** of therapy with clear endpoints defined.
9. At the end of the meeting, **summarize agreement, describe** what the family can expect, and **explain** their role in subsequent decision making.
10. Set time for **follow-up meeting** if needed.