OBJECTIVES FOR COMMON CLINICAL PROBLEMS

Dying Patient

A. Knowledge

1. Pain
   - Understand the pathophysiology of pain and ways in which pain can present in clinical practice
   - Understand the pharmacology of and dosing strategies for medications used to treat pain including effective prescribing, titration, breakthrough dosing and prevention of side effects
     - Opiates
     - Non-opiates
   - Understand adjuvant modalities and medications for pain

2. Suffering
   - Recognize the symptoms that often experience by patients near the end of life, including fatigue, anorexia and cachexia, constipation, dyspnea, nausea and vomiting, delirium, anxiety and depression
   - Understand how these present and how they can be mitigated

3. Bioethics/Legal Aspect
   Distinguish between physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia and palliative/terminal sedation, and withholding and withdrawing therapy
B. Skills

1. Pain, Suffering and Treatment Plans
   - Assess pain and symptoms effectively via a pain history, appropriate physical exam and relevant investigations
   - Develop an evidence-based approach to mitigate the suffering (see knowledge for specifics) experienced by patient near the end of life
   - Assist in monitoring the efficacy of treatment plans
   - Communicate information about the illness effectively—including bad news
   - Participate effectively in patient and family meetings
   - Assist in the education of patients and family about end-of-life care issues and pain and symptom management
   - Assist in determining, recording and implementing goals of care through effective communication with patients, families and other caregivers
   - Propose advance care plans, including developing and discussing advance directives with patients and families
   - Describe models of end-of-life care

2. Psychosocial and spiritual needs
   - Assess psychosocial and spiritual issues in end-of-life care, including grief
   - Develop and propose a care plan in collaboration with other disciplines
   - Self-assess one’s own attitudes and beliefs in caring for the dying
   - Demonstrate cultural, religious and Aboriginal sensitivity in addressing end-of-life care

Approved by Department of Medicine Undergraduate Medical Education Committee
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