

## Module II- Communicating with the Dying Patient

### Activity #1- Scenarios- How do you Respond?

Case #1: Joe has been your patient for 4 weeks. He has been talkative & cooperative during visits prior to this one. Today you find him in bed, curtains pulled, quiet, uncooperative, don't want you to do anything for him.

What will you do?

Case #2: You are caring for Ms. Robertson who is a 55 year old lady admitted to hospice 4 weeks ago with end-stage COPD and CHF. Today you can see that her condition has worsened since you were there two days ago. When you asked her how she is doing today, her reply is, "I am getting ready to go home." Her respirations are 50 per minute and she is gasping for air.

How do you respond?

Case #3: Mr. Clark is a 84 year old gentleman with Stage IV Liver Cancer. He has been in hospice for 3 weeks. When you arrive at Mr. Clark's home today for your first visit with him you are met at the door by his three oldest daughters and his wife. You are asked to take off your name badge and anything that says anything about hospice and told not to say anything to him about his terminal condition or end of life, because it will upset him too bad.

How would you handle this?

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### Suggestions for Scenarios

Suggestions for Scenario #1:

Remain calm and cordial=remember this is not personal toward you

Sit with him- offer to listen, demonstrate caring and compassion

Follow the POC

Report to supervisor

Communication between team members especially important with this type behavior.

Suggestions for Scenario #2:

Remain calm.

Implement any measures appropriate for providing some comfort

Ask questions of caregiver to gather more information

Call supervisor for further instructions

Suggestions for Scenario #3: Remember the Conspiracy of Silence

- Show compassion
- Honest and open communication
- Active Listening
- Be present
- Emotional support

Remain calm

Be honest with daughters, wife and patient

Explain, the need to be honest with patient in your working relationship, assuring them you will not bring it up, but you have to be honest with him just as you are honest with them.

Call supervisor or offer to have someone from the IDG come and talk to them.