Palliative Care for the Vascular Patient

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DISCLOSURES

Kathryn Schlenker, DO

- No relevant financial relationship reported

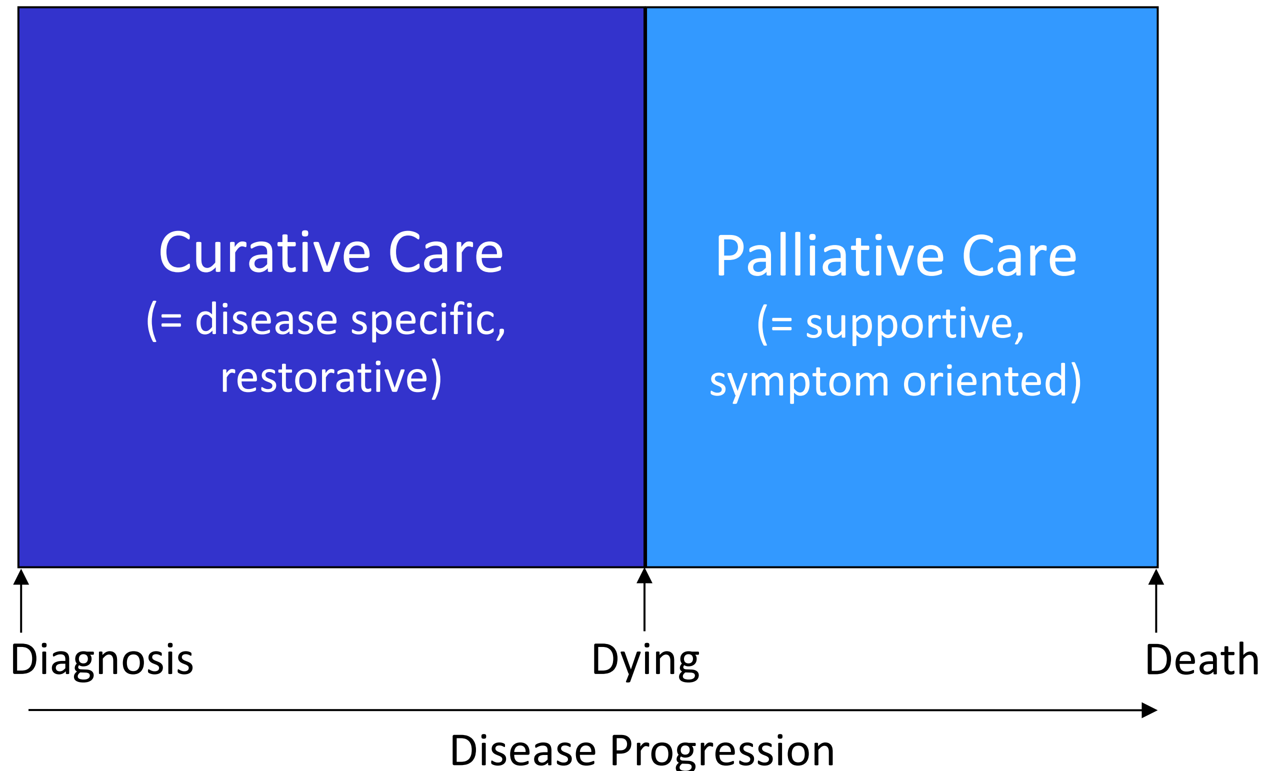
Goals and Objectives

- Provide an overview of Palliative Care.
- Explore Advance Care Planning and it's role in caring for the vascular patient.
- Outline a basic goals of care discussion.
- Review available advance care planning resources.

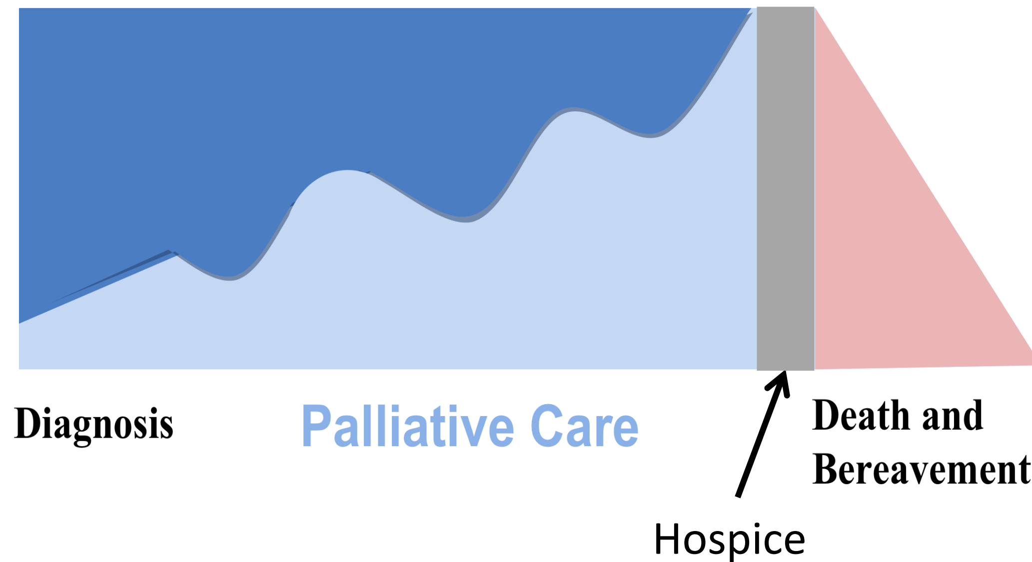
Definition of Palliative Care

- 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.**

Traditional Dichotomy of Curative and Palliative Care for Chronic Progressive Illness



Conceptual Shift for Palliative Care



Primary Palliative Care	Specialty Palliative Care
Discuss prognosis for common illnesses	Complex discussions of prognosis
Basic assessment and communication of values, psychosocial/cultural/spiritual needs to create individualized plan of care	In depth assessment and care planning, especially in times of uncertainty or when significant distress present
Basic advance care planning	Advance care planning with complex social context and complicated medical care
Basic symptom management	Treatment of severe/refractory symptoms
Basic conflict resolution	Complex conflict resolution within families and between families and providers
Identify ethical and /or moral distress	Advise when ethical/moral distress present
Basic knowledge of hospice	In depth knowledge of hospice

Quill and Abernathy, NEJM 2013

Advance Care Planning

A process of communication between the patient, the family/health care proxy, and staff for the purpose of prospectively identifying a surrogate, clarifying treatment preferences, and developing individualized goals of care near the end of life.

Davidson, Fast Facts and Concepts #194

Goals of Advance Care Planning

- Enhance patient and family education about their illness, including prognosis and likely outcomes of alternative care plans.
- Define the key priorities in end-of-life care and develop a care plan that addresses these issues.
- Shape future clinical care to fit the patient's preferences

Davidson, Fast Facts and Concepts #194

Advance Directive

- Written instruction relating to the provision of future health care when an individual lacks decisional capacity
- Generally refers to 3 documents:
  - Living Will
  - DPOAHC
  - POLST

Davidson, Fast Facts and Concepts #194

Communication Strategies

- Normalize the conversation
  - “I talk with all of my patients about their healthcare preferences, especially before having a surgery.”

Patient perspective and expectations

- Understanding
  - How do you see things for yourself (your health) right now?
  - What has the doctor told you about your health/condition?
  - What have you been told about surgery?

Bernacki and Block, JAMA Intern Med 2014

Prognosis & Complications

Worst Case

Most Likely

Best Case

Patient perspective and expectations

- Understanding
- Hopes
  - What are you hoping for?
  - What are your goals and priorities?

Bernacki and Block, JAMA Intern Med 2014

Patient perspective and expectations

- Understanding
- Hopes
- Concerns
  - Do you have any concerns or worries about your health? Your current situation?
  - Do you have any specific concerns about the surgery?

Bernacki and Block, JAMA Intern Med 2014

Patient perspective and expectations

- Understanding
- Hopes
- Concerns
- Acceptable Quality of Life
  - Function: What abilities are so critical to your life that you can't imagine living without them?
  - Trade Offs: If you become sicker, how much are you willing to go through for the possibility of gaining more time?

Bernacki and Block, JAMA Intern Med 2014

Be Specific

- Extended ICU stay with debility
- Dependence on others for care
- Living in a nursing facility
- Stroke
- Ventilator dependence
- Hemodialysis

Patient perspective and expectations

- Understanding
- Hopes
- Concerns
- Acceptable Quality of Life
- Surrogate Decision Maker
    - If for some reason something unexpected happened, who would you want to make medical decisions on your behalf?

Bernacki and Block, JAMA Intern Med 2014

Surrogate Decision Making in Washington State

- Appointed guardian
- DPOAHC
- Spouse
- Children of at least eighteen years of age—consensus
- Parents—consensus
- Adult siblings—consensus

Advance Care Planning Resources

- Advance Directive/Living Will
  - Honoring Choices: www.honoringchoicespnw.org/
  - The Conversation Project: www.theconversationproject.org/
  - End of Life Washington: www.endoflifewa.org
  - WSMA: www.wsma.org/advance-directives

- DPOAHC
  - www.wsma.org/advance-directives

- POLST
  - www.wsma.org/POLST

Thank You

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