Poster 9: Practice
Evaluating and Caring for a Heart Transplant Candidate.
Do We Provide Multi-, Inter-, or Transdisciplinary Care?

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The United Network of Organ Sharing (UNOS) requires that a heart transplant team consist of: heart transplant surgeon, a transplant physician, clinical transplant coordinator, financial coordinator, persons able to address psychosocial needs of the patients and their families, and a pharmacist trained in caring for transplant patients. It is also required that collaborative involvement is present with experts in fields such as: radiology, anesthesiology, respiratory care, physical therapy; and rehabilitative medicine, just to name a few. There has been much literature published supporting the “interdisciplinary approach to patient care.”

Our Heart Transplant Team consists of: physicians, surgeons, transplant coordinators, heart failure coordinators, nurses, social service, psychologist, nutritionists, pharmacists, physical therapists, medical residents, and the patients themselves. This would definitely define a multidisciplinary team. We all may work together, interdisciplinary, to provide what each of us assesses as the best therapy for our patients. But, when we meet as a group, we put all of our assessments and goals together to develop a transdisciplinary plan of care.

We utilize the input from the multidisciplines in order to develop a plan that is going to best meet the needs of the patient, which does not always translate into the patient being the best candidate for transplant. We often reassess the desired outcomes of the patients’ therapies and develop plans to achieve our newly achieved goals.