OBJECTIVES

1) Ensure that students of PT, OT, and nursing as well as Internal Medicine Interns gain exposure to roles of other healthcare professionals.
2) Explore strategies to optimize the interaction between various healthcare professionals to achieve the goal of family centered care, specifically at the end-of-life.
3) Increase awareness of the emotions that we feel as healthcare professionals when it is necessary to deliver bad news.

BACKGROUND

Medical literature abounds with works on the topic of delivering bad news. In this exercise, the participants were taught the SPIKES1 Protocol (Setting, Perception, Invitation, Knowledge, Empathy, Strategy and Summary). A series of three videos were developed to depict the story of Mel Voight, a 55 year old man suffering from end stage lung cancer now in a persistent vegetative state. The videos portray the interaction of physicians, therapists, and nurses with the Voight family as they discuss issues surrounding end-of-life care.

Symposium Outline

1:00pm  Introduction and Background: view the MD and PT/OT videos of the Voight story*
1:45pm  Panel discussion of roles in End-of-Life Care led by a physician, nurse, physical therapist, occupational therapist, family therapist, social worker, and pastoral care provider
2:40pm View final video to set up the family meeting
3:00pm  Interprofessional small group breakout sessions
4:00pm  Sample family meeting on stage with standardized patients (Mel’s wife and daughter), physician, nurse, and physical therapist
4:15pm Final debriefing and closure led by family therapist, Catholic priest, Rabbi, and the Dean of JCHP

* used in discipline specific classes prior to symposium

METHODS

SELECTED RESULTS FROM THE POST-SYMPOSIUM SURVEY

Participant Demographics (N=192)

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SUMMARY

65.5% of the participants completed the pre- and post-event survey. 82% of the respondents perceived the symposium as a valuable experience. 54% of the respondents would recommend this experience to others.

Pre- and post-symposium surveys revealed an increased comfort level in dealing with end-of-life issues.

Highlights of this educational experience include exposure to other medical professions and experience in family centered communication strategies.

This program could be adapted for any school with students of multiple disciplines to encourage teamwork in patient care.