

Maintaining Balance between Medical Progress and Diagnosis to Promote Patient Agency in Terminal Illness

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Description

Terminal illness is a tough adversary, casting its long shadow not only over the affected individual but also over the lives of their loved ones. As medical science advances, providing hope for numerous ailments, the stark reality remains that certain conditions defy our best efforts, leading to the extreme and often devastating label of terminal illness. The intensely personal and emotional journey that people take when they come to terms with their death is at the core of terminal illness. Patients suffer a great deal psychologically as they deal with dread, anxiety, and the wide range of complicated emotions that come with a poor prognosis. The lack of confidence about life expectancy increases the need for non-clinical support networks. Healthcare professionals must understand the need of providing mental health support in addition to medical care.

Moreover, the impact of terminal illness extends beyond the afflicted individual to their family and friends. Witnessing a loved one contends with the harsh realities of a terminal diagnosis places an indescribable burden on those closest to them. Family members often find themselves navigating uncharted waters, torn between providing support and dealing with their own emotional turmoil. The need for open communication, empathy, and resources to address the psychological well-being of both patients and their families cannot be overstated. Healthcare workers have a responsibility that goes beyond providing basic medical treatment when a patient is facing death. It becomes critical to provide compassionate treatment, stressing the value of attending to patients' emotional and spiritual needs in addition to their physical problems. Healthcare professionals need to understand the importance of palliative care and make sure that patients receiving terminal diagnoses are treated with dignity and comfort throughout their journey. When treating patients who are terminally sick, medical practice should be based on empathy. Taking the time to understand the unique needs, desires, and fears of each patient encourages a sense of trust and establishes a more supportive doctor-patient relationship. Furthermore, even in situations where patients have few options, healthcare providers should actively involve patients in decision-making processes while respecting their autonomy and preferences. The foundation of advance care planning, an essential part of providing

patients with terminal illnesses with comprehensive care, is empowerment. Encouraging open discussions about end-of-life preferences, values, and goals ensures that patients maintain agency in their healthcare decisions. With this procedure, there is less chance of needless interventions and the patient's desires are honored, allowing for a more seamless shift from curative to palliative care. Healthcare providers play a pivotal role in initiating and guiding these conversations, addressing the complexities of advanced care planning with sensitivity and compassion. Making living wills, durable power of attorney for healthcare, and other legal instruments guarantees that the patient's wishes are respected even in their absence by giving family members and medical professionals a through identification.

The societal narrative surrounding terminal illness often falls short of addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by those affected. The widespread fear of dying and social distaste for talking about matters related to end-of-life care lead to a society that avoids acknowledging the severity of terminal illnesses. There has to be a paradigm change that accepts death as inevitable and encourages open discussions about dying. Education is a key factor in changing how society views terminal disease. Efforts aimed at raising consciousness on the various facets of palliative care, mourning, and loss can encourage a more understanding and knowledgeable community. We can all work together to eliminate the stigma attached to talking about mortality by promoting a culture that honors and supports those who are facing terminal diagnoses.

A comprehensive and sophisticated strategy is necessary to address the complex web issues that terminal disease brings. It is necessary to reevaluate our healthcare practices and cultural attitudes in light of terminal disease, taking into account not only the individual experiences of patients but also the rippling effects on their families and the larger narrative in society. Compassionate care, advance care planning, and a shift in societal perspectives are integral components of a holistic framework that can provide solace, dignity, and support to those navigating the difficult journey of terminal illness. As we strive for medical advancements, let us not forget the human aspect of healthcare, ensuring that every individual facing a terminal diagnosis is treated with the empathy, respect, and dignity they deserve.