

**16<sup>th</sup> Annual Surgeon in Society**  
**Vaughan Estates**  
**July 6, 2015**

**Background:** Given the aging population and focus on patient-centered-care, all surgeons require skills for communicating with patients with respect to difficult topics including end-of-life decision making.

**Objectives:** Participants will learn about roles and responsibilities of the surgeon in end of life discussions and advanced care planning in high risk surgical patients and discuss difficult issues that may arise. Participants will acquire tools for conflict resolution.

**Reading:** Each participant will receive a copy of Atul Gawande's book "Being Mortal" as a supplemental material. It is highly encouraged that you take the time to read this engaging and important work.

**8:00** Breakfast

**8:30** Welcome and Introductions (Dr. Ron Levine)

**8:40** I'm not a palliative care doctor so why this is important? (Dr Preeti Dhar)

**8:55** Discussion of cases.

**9:20** Groups report back.

**9:40** High –risk surgery and a framework for surgeons discussing resuscitation. (Dr. Karen Devon)

**9:50** Video Demonstration and Phraseology (Dr. James Downar)

**10:15** break

**10:45** Conflict resolution (Dr. James Downar)

**12:00** Lunch



Cases:

- 1) On a social media platform, someone who is not currently your patient asks you a medical question about the value of a particular surgical approach that their family member is undergoing. How should you respond? What are your considerations? What if a family member of a patient currently in your care tries to communicate with you here? If they email you, is that different? What if the family member is someone you got to know well, but is not related to a current or future patient you will ever care for again?
  
- 2) A) You are on rotation in the emergency department. A 30yo F presents with headache after a syncopal episode, disoriented and unable to communicate. The plan is for emergency operation for a presumed brain aneurysm. The medical student, to be helpful, googles the patient and finds that she has a Facebook account. The patient appears to be married and you are able to message her spouse. Should you try to connect with the spouse? Is it ever appropriate to look up patients?  
  
B) You are on a Plastic Surgery rotation preparing to do a TRAM flap on a woman the next day. Before going to bed you log into your Facebook account and note that a friend has posted “wishing my mom luck tomorrow” with a pink ribbon photo. You realize that tomorrow’s patient is your friend’s mom. His timeline shows family pictures of his mom smoking, many of which you believe are recent. Since smoking increases risks of complications and flap failure what would you do? What concerns do you have? Would you discuss this with your friend? With the staff surgeon? What obligations do you have to your patients? What obligations do patient have?
  
- 3) A) You are on the admissions committee for medical students applying to your Surgery residency program. You know one of the students and happen to follow him on Instagram. This person posts a lot of photos some of which seem disrespectful to homeless people on the streets of Toronto. His application for residency makes him appear ideal for your program. No one of the committee has seen these posts. What do you do?  
  
B) Soon you will apply to fellowship programs. You note that some programs say “your social media profile might be used in the selection process”. Do you think this is ethical and appropriate, as long as they state this clearly? Do you have concerns about your social media profile? What kinds of posts are questionable or should be avoided? Can you separate your private from your professional life online?
  
- 4) You are on call seeing a new patient. Your senior resident is not in house and asks you to take a photo of the xray and email it to her. Later, the staff texts you asking for the MRN so that she can look at the chart from home. Have you been in this type of circumstance? How do you respond to these requests? What are your considerations and options?



