PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES
SELF CARE

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Disclosures

Marlene Foreman has no real or perceived conflicts of interest that relate to this presentation.

Objectives

- Describe professional boundaries.
- Discuss the need to maintain professional boundaries in hospice and palliative care.
- Explain consequences of ineffective boundaries.
- Discuss the relationship between maintaining effective boundaries and self care.
Professional Boundaries

What does boundary mean to a professional?
How do different disciplines use boundaries?
- Physicians
- Nurses
- Social Workers
- Aides
- Volunteers

Boundaries in Hospice and Palliative Care

- Patients and families are vulnerable
- Patients and families usually like to bond with one person and remain with that person to the exclusion of others unless educated regarding the interdisciplinary team

Consequences of Ineffective Boundaries

- Professional my attempt to usurp family roles
- Professional may have unmet needs and place unfair burden on family to meet the professional’s needs
- Professional spends too much time, energy, or money at work to the detriment of one’s own family
Case Study

You have become friends with one of your patient’s daughters. When the daughter asks you to babysit her two children for the weekend, you eagerly accept. Then you realize that your son has a game on Saturday morning and you offered a coworker to take calls for about 2 hours on Saturday night. How do you resolve this dilemma?

Do you tell your patient’s daughter that you can’t babysit?

Should you have accepted in the first place?

Self Care

• The professional has needs that should be met during the off-duty time
• Too much time and energy spent at work trying to meet the needs of your patients and staff leave you too tired to cope with life, eat well, exercise, and “refill your cup” with hobbies and spiritual activities
• What are some healthier ways to create boundaries and care for yourself?

Case Study

You are off this weekend and have a hiking trip planned with your family. You have just started a new book that you want to begin while resting in the hammock. Your patient found your phone number and called in crisis.

Do you change your plans and go to your patient?

Do you explain that there is an excellent nurse on duty that can assist the patient?

Did you educate your patient that the patient is in hospice care and the interdisciplinary team is there to meet their needs?

Did you personally give the patient your personal phone number and promise to be there anytime?
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