

# **Communicating Bad News**

(Rev. 1/13/06)

## **Learning Objectives**

- 1.** Describe the physical setting where bad news should be delivered
- 2.** Understand the six basic steps used to initially deliver bad news
- 3.** Understand key elements in discussing prognosis
- 4.** Understand key elements of telephone notification of death
- 5.** Understand basic ways to therapeutically respond to patient/family emotion
- 6.** Describe two main difficulties that you personally have in delivering bad news
- 7.** Demonstrate the ability to deliver bad news with compassion and honesty using this six-step approach

# Communicating Bad News

## Basic Format

(Rev. 1/11/06)

1. Background reading (available on line)
  - Adapted EPEC Module 2
  - Article: I wish things were different...
  
2. Noon Conference (or equivalent)
  - Administer pre-test multiple choice questions (5 minutes)
  - Sharing of experiences where bad news was delivered well and not well (10 min)
    - Break up into groups of three to discuss cases
    - Then collectively discuss
      - Critical elements to include
      - Common errors
      - Common personal barriers
  - PowerPoint slides of key elements (15 min)
    - Preparation
    - Six steps
    - Caveats
  - Interactive Video Demonstration (15 min)
    - Scenario re-enacted from real clinical scenario (see attached)
    - Group discussion of each segment
  - Wrap up (5 minutes)
  
3. Field evaluation on performance with patients / families
  - Pre-printed competency evaluation forms
  - Available on-line
  
4. Final competency evaluation (available to program on request)
  - Repeat of pre-test questions
  - Delivering bad news to standardized patient