

MVP for proactive COVID discussions

3 communication skills

A. Empower

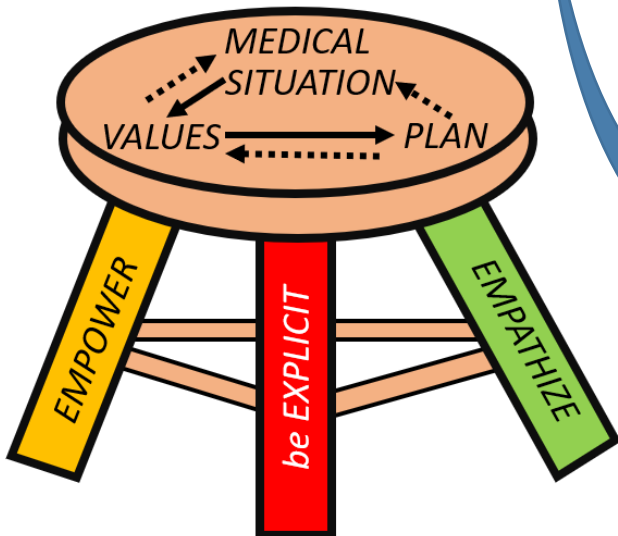
- Ask first
- Calibrate
- Listen

B. be Explicit

- Share the facts
- Precisely
- Concisely

C. Empathize

- Expect & respond to emotion



3 step process

1. **M**edical situation

Seek mutual understanding of:

- Possible or new Dx
- Dz Progression
- Prognosis
- Treatment options
- Limited resources**

2. **V**alues

Explore what matters

- Preferences
- Hopes
- Worries

3. **P**lan

Define next steps

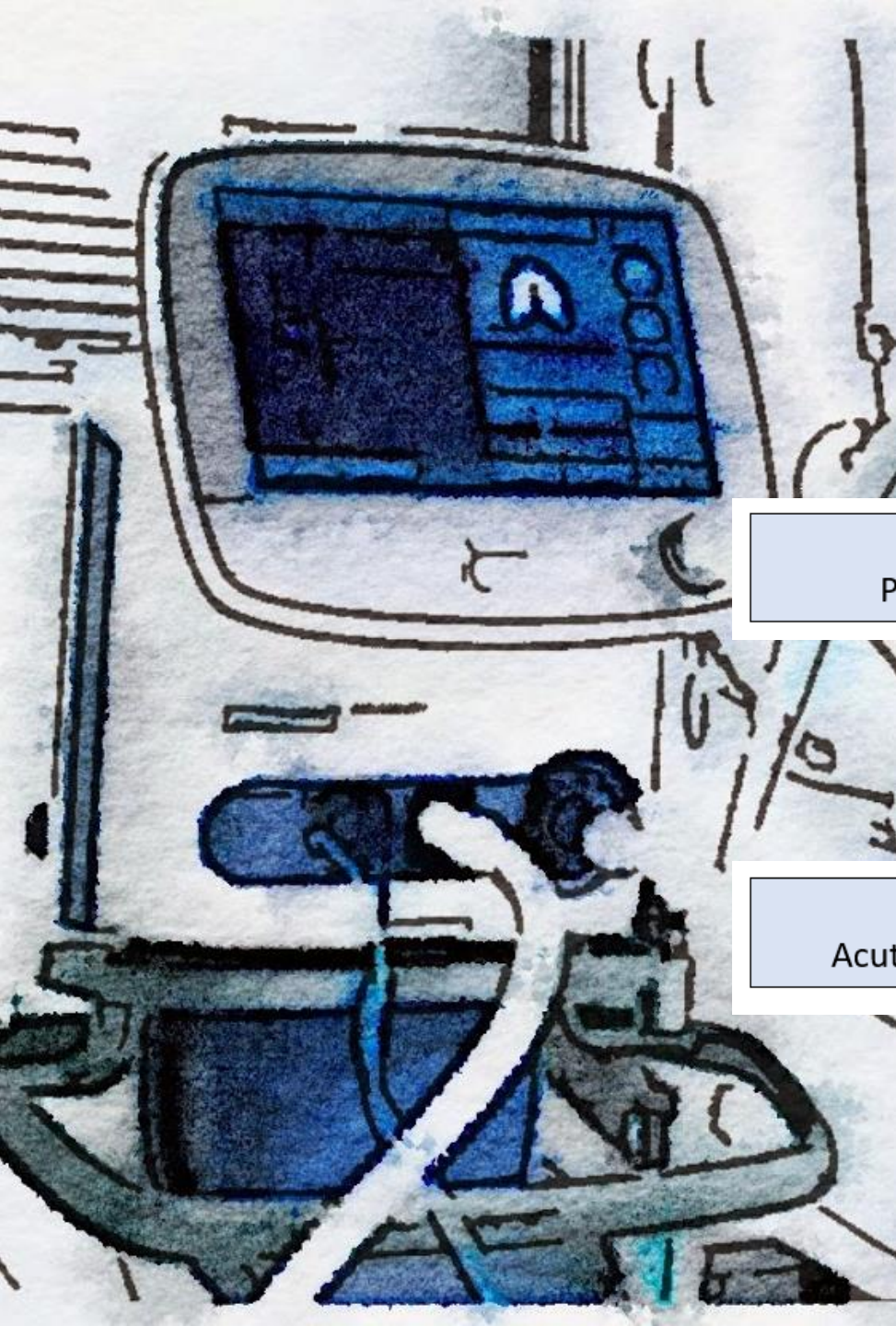
- Treatment choices...
- ...**or lack of choices**
- Code status

communication skill tips

- COVID is on many people's mind, and I think it is important to discuss with you, okay?
- What have you been thinking about COVID?
- I am hopeful you won't get COVID, and I am afraid...
- ... if you do get COVID it could be serious, and life-threatening.
- I'd like us to explore your wishes if you do get COVID (*or if you have any acute illness OR disease progression*) okay?
- Yes, this can be scary. Talking about this up front will help us and your family honor your wishes.

- Given your medical situation, what matters most to you if you get seriously ill with COVID (*or something else*)?
- If I hear you right, you value... (*ex., quality of life over length of life*)
- Can we explore what you would want if you were so ill you needed a ventilator?
- Who is your HCP, or back-up, if you can't speak for yourself?
- I appreciate your courage in discussing this painful possibility.

- Now that I understand your values, I'd like to offer a recommendation, okay?
- Given what you told me, I recommend...
- Does this make sense? What do you think?
- Now that this is clear, let's complete 2 forms (*HCP, MOLST*) to make sure we and the medical team honor them fully, okay?
- Yes, this IS hard. You've done a great job taking care of yourself, and your family.



4 Scenarios

1. CONVENTIONAL SCENARIO

Proactive advance care planning

2. CONTINGENCY SCENARIO

Acute planning, potential ventilator limits

3. CRISIS SCENARIO/EARLY

Acute planning, actual ventilator limits

4. CRISIS SCENARIO/LATE

Discontinuing a desired ventilator

1. CONVENTIONAL SCENARIO

Proactive advance care planning

*Speaking to
the patient*

1. **M**edical situation

Seek mutual understanding

COVID is on many people's mind, and I think it is important to discuss with you, okay?

Empower

I am hopeful you won't get COVID, and I am afraid...
... if you do get COVID it could be serious, and life-threatening.

Empathize

be Explicit

Yes, this can be scary. Talking about this up front will help us and your family honor your wishes.

Empathize

Ok...

Yeah...I'm really terrified of leaving the house! Do you think it could get that bad for me?

Yeah, it is...

1. CONVENTIONAL SCENARIO
Proactive advance care planning

2. Values

Explore what matters

Can we explore what you would want if you were so ill you needed a ventilator?

Empower

I appreciate you this painful possibility. Given your medical situation, what matters most to you if you get seriously ill with COVID (or something else)?

Empathize

Empower

If I hear you right, you value doing everything you can to get better, even if it's uncomfortable

be Explicit

I don't want to think about that...but I guess I should

I need to be there for my grandkids!

Well, yes...but...I don't want to be a vegetable...

1. CONVENTIONAL SCENARIO

Proactive advance care planning

3. Plan

Define next steps

Now that I understand your values, I'd like to offer a recommendation, okay?

Empower

Given what you told me, I recommend that we complete a form to make sure we try to get you better...though not on a machine "forever"

be Explicit

Yes, this IS hard. You've done a great job taking care of yourself, and your family.

Empathize

Yes, please!

Yeah...I want a chance...and I don't want to be "stuck"...this is awful to think about!

Thank you...I guess that's the best any of us can do...

1. CONVENTIONAL SCENARIO
Proactive advance care planning

2. CONTINGENCY SCENARIO

Acute planning, potential ventilator limits

*Speaking to
the patient*

1. **M**edical situation

Seek mutual understanding

I'd like to discuss some difficult information with you, okay?

Empower

This COVID crisis may deplete ICU beds/ventilators/etc. to that point that There just aren't enough to go around to those who need them.

be Explicit

I can only imagine this must be really scary to hear.

Empathize

Ok...

Oh God, I was afraid you'd say that! But...I'll still get one, right?

Yeah, it is...

2. CONTINGENCY SCENARIO

Acute planning, potential ventilator limits

2. Values

Explore what matters

What are your worries?

Empower

I don't want to die...I need to be there for my kids!

I hear you and we'll do everything we can to make sure you are. If you got sicker what would you hope for in this awful situation?

Empathize

Empower

I can see how hard this is to consider...and I hope not. Who would help make medical decisions if you were too sick to speak for yourself?

be Explicit

Do you think I will?!!

...my husband...

3. Plan

Define next steps

I appreciate your courage in discussing these things. Is it ok to talk about what we can do.

Empower

OK...

We'll do everything we can to get you better, including a ventilator... keeping in mind that there may come a time when this may be unavailable

be Explicit

Oh God...I pray it doesn't come to that!

Me too! This is a really difficult place to be, and I promise that we are here for you.

Empathize

Yeah...ok...thanks...

2. CONTINGENCY SCENARIO
Acute planning, potential ventilator limits

3. CRISIS SCENARIO/EARLY

Acute planning, actual ventilator limits

*Speaking to
the patient*

1. **M**edical situation

Seek mutual understanding

I'm afraid I have more difficult news to share with you.

Empower

What could be worse than this?

This COVID crisis has depleted ICU beds/ventilators/etc. There just aren't enough to go around to those who need them.

be Explicit

You're rationing! You're playing God! You can't do that!

I can see this is hard to hear. I wish we had (more ventilators, more space in the ICU, etc...).

Empathize

You're *^#% straight this is "hard to hear"!!!

2. Values

Explore what matters

Yes, this is a horrible situation. Given what you've heard, what are you thinking? What are your worries/hopes?

Empower

I hear you and we'll [tx syx]. If you got sicker what would you hope for in this awful situation?

Empower

I understand, the most important things are for you to breathe easily and, when the time comes, say good-bye to your wife

be Explicit

I don't want to die...but I REALLY don't want to suffocate to death!

I'd want to be able to say "good-bye" to my wife.

[Nods with tears in his eyes]

3. Plan

Define next steps

Now that I understand your values in this situation, I'd like to offer a recommendation, OK?

Empower

Yes, it is a tough forced choice, for sure. Given what you told me, I recommend...

be Explicit

This is a really terrible place to be, and I promise that we are here for you.

Empathize

OK, but it sounds like I die no matter what I do. What a choice!

Yeah, I guess that's the best we can do...

[Nods with tears in his eyes]

4. CRISIS SCENARIO/LATE

Discontinuing a desired ventilator

*Speaking to
the surrogate*

1. **M**edical situation

Seek mutual understanding

I have some serious news to share with you about your father ... Are you in a place where you can talk?

Empower

No, he didn't die, but the ventilator has not helped him recover, and I'm afraid because of the COVID crisis our guidelines require that we stop the ventilator

be Explicit

I cannot imagine how painful this is to hear.

Empathize

What's going on? I'm 5 hours away! Did he die?!

Oh no! You can't just let him die!

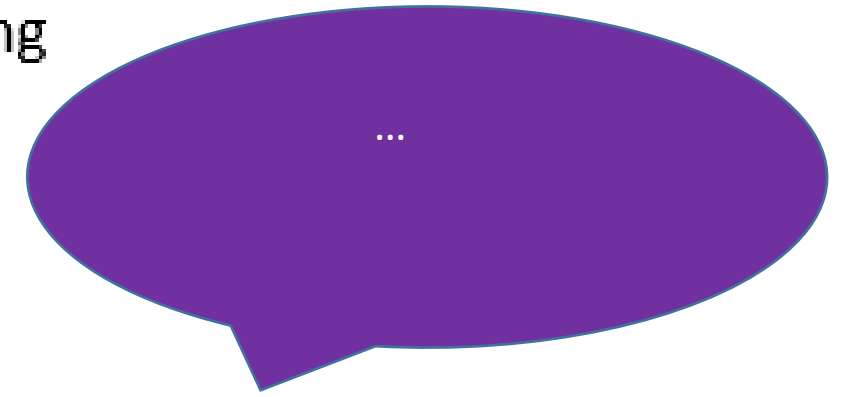
This is unbelievable! You're doing this because he's old/black/poor...

1. **M**edical situation

Seek mutual understanding

I can see how it might seem like that. This is a truly terrible thing.

Empathize



We are using guidelines developed by experts in ethics and healthcare to make the extremely difficult decisions about who can get these limited resources.

be Explicit

2. **V**alues

Explore what matters

So you're going to play God, huh?

I really hear you, and I wish things were different. Given things as they are, what would your dad would say now? What would be important to him

Empathize

Empower

He'd be pissed as hell about The Man taking over his life. But he'd also say, "Don't fuss, let me go."

4. **CRISIS SCENARIO/LATE**

Discontinuing a desired ventilator

3. Plan

Define next steps

He sounds like someone I would have really like to have known before all this.

Empathize

Now that I understand your father's values in this unprecedented situation, I'd like to offer a recommendation, OK?

Empower

I recommend that we give him medication to make sure he is very comfortable and sleepy, then remove the ventilator.

be Explicit

Yeah, he's a good man.

Fire away...what choice do I have?!

Can I see him? I want to hold his hand before the end.