

She Didn't Mean It: A Role-Play

General Instructions

All players should read the general instructions. Before beginning, teachers should review "Using the Role-Plays" in the introduction to Part V.

Parties

Pat Dee, patient's son/daughter

Tanner Dee, patient's son/daughter

M. Eberhart, patient advocate

Dr. Henderson

Bioethics mediator

Background

Mrs. Dee is an elderly woman, critically ill with multiple medical problems, currently in the ICU. She is on a ventilator and her blood pressure is falling, even though she is on medication to support her pressure. She has had one episode in which the staff felt they might need to attempt resuscitation, but the patient stabilized and remains in the same tenuous condition. Mrs. Dee's kidneys have failed, and the renal consultant raised the possibility of dialysis. Mrs. Dee made a living will years ago that she later affirmed, stating that if critically ill and unlikely to recover she should not get dialysis, a ventilator, or artificial hydration or nutrition and that she should have a DNR order. She also stated that she never wanted to be a burden to her family. Her named health care proxy is her husband, who has since become severely demented. Mrs. Dee has been his primary caretaker at home. The Dees have two grown children, Pat and Tanner. Tanner, who wants to honor her mother's intentions, just heard that the nephrologist got Pat to sign consent for dialysis and is very upset.