



FAMILY CONFERENCE: NURSE'S ROLE

Family conference goals:

- Review the patient's situation / prognosis
- Review overall goals of care
- Ensure that treatment plan is consistent with the patient's prognosis and goals of care

Nurse's roles for family conferences:

- Ensure key topics are discussed
- Provide emotional support
- Ensure family understands information
- Encourage discussion of patient preferences

Skills to Practice	Examples
Open-ended questions	Ask physician to address a topic, based on a family need you identified: <i>"John, before the meeting, you said it would be really helpful to discuss what type of care your dad might need if he leaves the ICU. Dr. Taylor, what are your thoughts on that topic?"</i>
Ask-Tell-Ask	Ensure that the family understands information presented: Doctor: <i>"He has renal failure, and we haven't been able to stabilize his electrolytes. At this point, we'd be looking at long-term renal replacement therapy."</i> Husband: <i>"Ok."</i> Nurse (Ask): <i>"Dr. Taylor, may I ask something? I just want to make sure we're being clear. Mr. Davis, could you tell me what you've understood of the conversation so far?"</i> Husband: <i>"It's kind of confusing actually."</i> Nurse (Tell): <i>"If I understand correctly, Dr. Taylor is worried that your dad will need dialysis, perhaps permanently."</i> Nurse (Ask): <i>"Does that make sense?"</i> Husband: <i>"Yes – but I'm not sure he'd want that."</i>
NURSE	<u>Name:</u> <i>"You sound sad."</i> <u>Understand:</u> <i>"This is a hard topic to discuss."</i> <u>Respect:</u> <i>"I'm so impressed with the strength your dad has shown through all of this."</i> <u>Support:</u> <i>"We'll all be here for you and your dad."</i> <u>Explore:</u> <i>"What's the most difficult part of this for you?"</i>
Hope / worry statements	<i>"We're also hoping that he can wake up to see his grandkids." "If I understand Dr. Taylor correctly, she is worried that your dad's kidneys are not improving, and that he isn't waking up."</i>