



Navigating complex end-of-life decisions in a family-centric society

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Abstract

End-of-life decision making frequently involves a complex balancing of clinical, cultural, social, ethical, religious and economic considerations. Achieving a happy balance of these sometimes-competing interests, however, can be particularly fraught in a family-centric society like Singapore where the family unit often retains significant involvement in care determinations necessitating careful consideration of the family's position during the decision-making process. While various decision-making tools such as relational autonomy, best interests principle and welfare-based models have been proposed to help navigate such difficult decision-making processes, their application in practical terms, however, is dubious at best. This case report is presented to highlight these issues and explore the utility of these frameworks within the Singapore end-of-life care context when the interests of the family may be dissonant from those of the patient.

Keywords

Best interests, case report, decision making, end of life, family, palliative care, relational autonomy, welfare