Evolving Role of Palliative Care and Hospice for Patients with Advanced Cardiac Disease (P15)

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Objectives
- Assess workshop participants’ needs, using an audience response system, regarding attitudes, knowledge, and skills on common issues in palliative and hospice care of patients with advanced cardiac diseases and tailor discussion based on audience needs.
- Define a model for high-quality, patient-centered care across the continuum for patients with cardiac diseases from the time of diagnosis to death.
- Describe the role of palliative care and hospice in cardiac disease, with special emphasis on barriers and strategies to overcome them.

Advances in cardiovascular medicine have led to remarkable success in life extension, which in turn has increased the prevalence of people living with heart failure and other chronic cardiac diseases. Many patients with advanced cardiac diseases require coordinated symptom management and decision support as the illness progresses, which offers an opportunity for synergism between HPM providers, primary care physicians, cardiologists, and cardiothoracic surgery teams. The opportunity for palliative care clinicians to partner in the care of cardiac patients will continue to grow in the future.

Despite heart disease being the leading cause of death and evidence supporting palliative care as an obvious strategy to address the needs of patients with cardiac disease, numerous studies have documented underutilization of palliative care and hospice. Patients with cardiac disease are often not receiving palliative care interventions, even at the end of life. For example, less than 10% of heart failure patients receive palliative care services, and heart disease is the primary diagnosis in less than 12% of hospice patients. Numerous studies have documented unmet needs, such as symptom management, difficulties performing daily activities, and psychosocial concerns in patients with cardiac disease.

With increasing recognition of the effectiveness of palliative care, a growing number of cardiologists and cardiothoracic teams are developing innovative programs to deliver timely palliative care interventions for patients and their caregiving families across the continuum of this complicated illness trajectory. Recent financial and delivery model reform has led to growing support for the palliative care and hospice model to improve outcomes such as readmissions.

An interdisciplinary team representing cardiology, palliative care, nursing, and primary care will lead this comprehensive, coordinated, and evidence-based workshop. They will share practical tools for decision support, prognostication, and program development. They will conduct a panel discussion on policy implications and discuss practical implications during the last 30 minutes.