

Introducing simulation training to improve the organ donation conversation

Dr. Jonathan Gatward
Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney

Ellie McCann

New South Wales Organ and Tissue Donation Service
(OTDS)



Background and aim

- The family consent rate for organ donation is low in Australia (45-50%)
- NSW OTDS has trained doctors and nurses to be 'Designated Requestors' (DRs) – to lead the organ donation conversation
- This training has been augmented with a simulation program
- The COMFORT Study is evaluating this process

Method

- We created a family donation conversation simulation training program using professional actors
- Real anonymised cases are used
- DRs hold a planning meeting with the medical team and then lead the donation conversation
- Scenarios are recorded for video-debriefing and future viewing
- Debriefing is conducted by qualified experts and includes use of video and feedback from actors both in and out-of-character

Results - evaluation

- 44 participants have completed the training to date

Question	Response
Is simulation a valuable addition to the core training?	Yes 100% No 0%
Should simulation be an essential part of the overall DR training?	Yes 91% No 9%
Do you feel more confident to be a DR?	Yes 95% No 5%
How much did the simulation meet your expectations?	Met 50% Exceeded 50%
Overall rating	Good 50% Outstanding 50%

Discussion

- Evaluation has been very positive
- Almost all DRs feel more confident in their role after the training
- Many practitioners have requested to come back for refresher courses

Discussion

- Since the commencement of the DR training in New South Wales in 2011, the family consent rate in the state has risen from 50% to 61%
- There has been an ongoing campaign to promote organ and tissue donation during this time which is likely to have contributed to this rise

Conclusion

- We have implemented a popular and successful simulation course to help train organ donation specialists in difficult end-of-life and organ donation discussions, which may be contributing to the increasing consent rate for organ donation in NSW

Acknowledgments

- NSW OTDS for funding the project and its staff for their administrative and acting skills in supporting roles!
- University of Technology Clinical Practice Laboratories for all their help and advice
- Our amazing actors for providing such an immersive and emotional experience and for their incisive feedback