



November 2006

Part II Fellowship Examination in Administrative Medicine

Case Study 3

You are the Cluster Chief Executive (CCE) of a large Cluster. There was a widely publicized incident of an injured policeman at one of your acute regional hospitals.

The policeman had sustained a major accident in the course of carrying out his duty. He was resuscitated and salvaged. However, due to excessive blood loss and shock, he suffered from severe anoxic brain damage with resultant vegetative state. His incident was widely reported, attracting much media and community attention. The relatives were very demanding and made full use of the publicity to pressurize the hospital and the government for all sorts of compensations and demands.

The media reported on the use of hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) to treat brain damaged patients. They quoted the example of the miraculous recovery after HBOT of a famous public figure who had sustained severe head injury from a traffic accident. The media supported the relatives to pressurize the hospital to provide this modality of treatment. However, the in-charge clinician was very skeptical about HBOT because of the lack of evidence based reports from literature. The clinical decision was being very clearly explained to the relatives, spelling out the potential harms that the treatment might cause to the patient.

Heated public debates were made over the need for providing the HBOT for the patient. Since this was a case of Injury On Duty, the Head of the Department also pressurized the hospital to provide this form of treatment in order to pacify the relatives. However, the Hospital Chief Executive (HCE) stood firm in backing up the clinical decision.

You received an urgent call one afternoon that the Chief Executive of HK SAR (CESAR) would be visiting the patient soon. You, the HCE and the consultant in-charge were present to greet the CESAR, and explain the case to him. A large group of journalists were present to report on this visit. Before speaking to the media, the CESAR put a strong request to you to seriously consider buying the HBO equipment, and start the treatment for the patient as soon as possible..

The next day, you received a call from the Hospital Governing Committee (HGC) Chairman, claiming that the parent Board could consider funding the HBO equipment and asked you for advice.

Please outline the action you would take in response to the CESAR's request.

2006 Case 3 Key Points (Compulsory question)

For Examiner

A PASS candidate would cover the following:

1. Identification of issues:

- Management of high profile patients
 - Dealing with the relatives
 - Dealing with the media
 - Dealing with other government departments
 - Dealing with community pressure groups / patient advocacy groups
- Methods of introduction of alternative mode of therapy / new technology. Role of specialists in providing evidence based advice
- Clinical autonomy v. administrative directives due to political pressure
- Clinical risk assessment and management
- Rationing of scarce healthcare resources - the priority target areas to be provided by the public healthcare system
- Management of donations
- Crisis management

2. Action plan:

- Analyze the clinical care plan of the patient –seek second opinion from local / external experts. Explore various alternative modalities of treatment.
- Do a proper technological assessment of the HBOT to be introduced.
- Explore the implementation plan of the HBOT if found indicated – what, where, how and time frame, and who to pay
- Outcome evaluation
- How to articulate and communicate your plan to the various stakeholders:

3. An exceptional candidate should be able to cover

- Introduction of new modalities of treatment – international perspectives, local professional guidelines, corporate policy.
- Clinical governance and accountability, cost effectiveness of different treatment modalities
- Describe the use of organizational adaptive strategies, healthcare planning, decision making process, negotiation skill
- relationship with :
 - relatives
 - media
 - other government department heads
 - political pressure bodies