

1. Fundamental policy

At Okayama University Hospital, we provide support for decision making based on patients' values and wishes so that it is possible for patients to receive the medical treatment and care that is best for them. Based on guidelines¹⁾ by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, physicians and other healthcare professionals provide appropriate information and explanations to patients and family members, and then a Medical Treatment and Care Team composed of people in a wide range of occupations conducts sufficient discussion and aims to provide medical treatment and care that respect patients' intentions.

2. Ways of making decisions about medical treatment and care

- For all decision making, the patient's values and wishes are confirmed first.
- The basis for decision making is sufficient discussion involving collaboration between the patient and/or family members and healthcare professionals (shared decision making).
- Based on the fact that a patient's intentions can change, the Medical Treatment and Care Team provides support so that the patient can convey his or her own intentions and so that discussions will be repeated.
- Pain and other unpleasant symptoms are sufficiently alleviated as much as possible by the Medical Treatment and Care Team, and comprehensive medical treatment and care that include mental and social assistance for the patient and family members are conducted.
- The content that is discussed is recorded in medical records and shared among members of the Medical Treatment and Care Team.

3. Process related to policy decisions for medical treatment and care

Policy decisions for medical treatment and care will be made based on the things below.

1) Cases in which it is possible to confirm the patient's intentions

- The basis will be the patient's decision making, based on sufficient discussion between the patient and the Medical Treatment and Care Team that is aimed at consensus formation.

2) Cases in which it is not possible to confirm the patient's intentions

- In a case in which a family member can assume the patient's intentions, those assumed intentions will be respected.
- In a case in which a family member cannot assume the patient's intentions, sufficient discussion will be conducted with the family member about the policy that is best for the patient, and the result of that discussion will be respected.
- In a case in which there are no family members or a case in which the family members leave judgment to the healthcare professionals, the Medical Treatment and Care Team will consider and make judgment about the best policy.

3) Provision of opportunities for discussion by multiple specialists

- In all of the aforementioned cases, when it is difficult to decide a policy, opportunities for discussion by multiple specialists (Ethics Consultation Team, Division of Medical Safety Management, Palliative Care Team, Multidisciplinary Medical Team, etc.) will be provided and consideration of and advice about the policy will be given.

Reference document

- 1) Guidelines Concerning the Decision-Making Process for Medical Treatment and Care in the Final Stages of Life (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare; Revised in March 2018)