The practice of Medicine is an Art.

Thalia Arwa, PhD
Clinical Bioethicist
Founding Director,
Salim El-Hoss Bioethics & Professionalism
Program
Faculty of Medicine
ta16@aub.edu.lb

Story of Rita Jibrail 2’’7’’

Catching words…

• The patient’s family: their views and perceptions of the events. Their understanding of what happened, of how, if at all, the medical situation was taken care of
• “I want them to tell me the truth regarding how she died.”
• “I want them to admit negligence. This is all I want”.
Med Mal.. In Lebanon??

• The media exacerbates issues, though most of the times, only to make the headlines.
• To say “NO” is denial
• Denying leads to us doing nothing, to holes remaining undetected, to the problem becoming bigger, and to bad patient outcome.

How do mistakes happen?

• No physician wakes up in the morning with the following thought:

Today, I feel like making a medical mistake!

Silent anguish of healers

• A gut feeling as to what is the *humane* thing to do
• The *right* thing to do
• The *legal* thing to do
• MORAL WISDOM and *Phronesis*
Few doctors in Lebanon held accountable for medical malpractice: LTA study

- Between 1996 and 2013, more than a thousand complaints related to medical malpractice were filed at the Order of Physicians.
- 400 of these complaints were referred to the disciplinary council
- About 300 disciplinary rulings and penalties were issued in accordance with the law.

A team from the AUB and LAU surveyed 6,807 healthcare providers at more than half the hospitals in Lebanon, between 2010 and 2011. Results: a total of 87.7% of staff feel that their mistakes are held against them and 82.3% are concerned that their mistakes—even if they are not their own but are systemic—are kept in their personal files instead of being used to instigate change.

Fadi El-Jardali, Hani Dimassi, Diana Jamal, Maha Jaafar and Nour Hemadeh; Predictors and outcomes of patient safety culture in hospitals; BMC Health Services Research 2011, 11:45

Doctors were suspended from work for limited periods ranging between two and six months in 50 of the 300 issued rulings. Only one doctor was permanently banned from practicing medicine, in 2001.

Fatigue...Multitasking... 3’ 18”
It ends up being about **getting the job done, not about the patient**

By not telling.. Am I an accomplice?

The third day of my internship in internal medicine in Hawaii, I went with on 60 year old patient who needed a colonoscopy. During the procedure, I became aware that the scope could only tolerate the colon with great difficulty. The scope was moved several times and the sedation made it even more difficult. The patient was in a great deal of pain and became very restless. He was given a close-up of the scope and that gave the impression it was moving closer to the tumor. After 20 minutes of this running and stopping, the tumor was palpable at the end of the scope and the patient was asked to stop. The physician stated the procedure would have to be stopped. The patient’s wife was called in and told that the patient had not been given any hard information. She was not informed of the pathology.

Two “shoulds” are clear to me: the physician should have stopped the procedure and the family should have been told about the specifics of the patient’s death. By not telling am I an accomplice, not legally but morally?
Residents experience MORAL DISTRESS

- Residents are physicians in training. Attendings play a role in shaping their moral compass
- This is NOT about a culture of whistleblowing
- The IC and role modeling
- The HC

When we say our lives are dedicated to yours.. and mean it

We need to act the only way the profession of medicine expects us to act: face it, deal with it, learn from it, and make changes.
Oh well (house) 33”

Enjoy the conference!