

Third Annual Interprofessional Forum on Ethics and Religion in Health Care

CHALLENGES IN ORGAN DONATION & TRANSPLANTATION

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

UMB's Southern Management Corporation Campus Center

MOCK ETHICS CONSULTATION CASE SUMMARY

Barbara, a 48 year old woman with severe liver disease from alcoholic cirrhosis, has struggled with alcoholism for the past 20 years. She did not think she could reach the 6 months of sobriety needed to be listed for a liver transplant, so she kept drinking, and her condition worsened. However, with much encouragement from her 14 year old daughter Vanessa and 20 year old son Reggie, she has just completed 3 months of sobriety by attending twice-weekly Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings and maintaining close contact with her AA sponsor. Unfortunately, her liver function has deteriorated further, requiring hospitalization. Her Model for End-Stage Liver Disease (MELD) score is now 40. Vanessa and Reggie beg with the liver transplant team to put Barbara on the list for a liver transplant. The transplant coordinator explains that Barbara needs to achieve 6 months of sobriety to be listed for transplant. Reggie contacts the hospital's ethics committee for an appeal.