

Four Box Method

<p style="text-align: center;">MEDICAL INDICATIONS <i>The Principles of Beneficence and Nonmaleficence</i></p> <p>What is patient's medical problem? History? Diagnosis? Prognosis?</p> <p>Is the problem acute? Chronic? Critical? Emergent? Reversible?</p> <p>What are the goals of treatment and probabilities of success?</p> <p>What are the plans in case of therapeutic failure?</p> <p>In summary, how can this patient be benefited by medical and nursing care, and how can harm be avoided?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PATIENT PREFERENCES <i>The Principle of Respect for Autonomy</i></p> <p>Is the patient mentally capable and legally competent? Is there evidence of incapacity?</p> <p>If competent, what is the patient stating about preferences for treatment?</p> <p>Has the patient been informed of benefits and risks, understood this information and given consent?</p> <p>If incapacitated, who is the appropriate surrogate? Is the surrogate using appropriate standards for decision making?</p> <p>Has the patient expressed prior preference, e.g. Advance Directives?</p> <p>Is the patient unwilling or unable to cooperate with medical treatment? If so, why?</p> <p>In sum, is the patient's right to choose being respected to the extent possible in ethics and law?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">QUALITY OF LIFE <i>The Principles of Beneficence and Nonmaleficence and Respect for Autonomy</i></p> <p>What are the prospects, with or w/o treatment, for a return to normal life?</p> <p>What physical, mental, and social deficits may remain, even if treatment succeeds?</p> <p>Are there any biases that might prejudice provider's evaluation of the patient's quality of life?</p> <p>Is the patient's present or future condition such that his or her continued life might be judged undesirable?</p> <p>Is there any plan or rationale to forgo treatment?</p> <p>Are there any plans for comfort and palliative care?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEXTUAL FEATURES <i>The Principles of Loyalty and Fairness</i></p> <p>Are there family issues that might influence treatment choice?</p> <p>Are there provider (physicians and nurses) issues that might influence treatment decisions?</p> <p>Are there financial and economic factors?</p> <p>Are there religious and cultural factors?</p> <p>Are there limits on confidentiality?</p> <p>Are there problems of allocation of resources?</p> <p>How does the law effect treatment decisions?</p> <p>Is clinical research or teaching involved?</p> <p>Is there any conflict of interest on the part of the providers or the institution?</p>