

Symposium 3: Paediatric End of Life care in the domiciliary setting – Dilemmas, challenges, consolations

Abstract

The journey towards end of life, is a period of immense vulnerability, pain, suffering, fear, and uncertainty. Particularly in children, where there is high heterogeneity with often rare disease, high diversity of disease trajectories, unpredictable prognosis, diversity of individual cognitive and developmental needs, varying cultural and social values and preferences amongst families - ethical issues, and moral distress is common.

Through this talk, I hope to discuss some ethical issues that can surface in the paediatric end of life period, looking at the interface with and within the domiciliary setting. I will discuss some of the considerations and risk factors for these issues; and share some approaches and ethical frameworks that can be helpful in navigating these ethically complex scenarios.

Dr Teresa Tan National University Hospital, Singapore

Biography

Dr Teresa Tan is a Consultant in Paediatrics and Palliative Care at the Khoo Teck Puat - National University Children's Medical Institute, National University Hospital.

She achieved First Class Honours for her intercalated BSc degree in Immunology in 2006, followed by MBBS in 2008, from Imperial College, London. She obtained her Masters of Medicine (Paediatric Medicine) from NUS, and Membership of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health in 2013. She completed Specialist Accreditation for Paediatric Medicine in 2017, and Adult Palliative Medicine in 2020.

Dr Tan is deeply passionate about the holistic and patient-centred philosophy of care for children with life-limiting illnesses, and their families. She is the first paediatrician in Singapore to be dually accredited in Palliative Medicine; and is now setting up a Paediatric Palliative Care Service at NUH. She collaborates closely with the multi-disciplinary team within KTP-NUCMI (NUH), and also across healthcare systems including Star PALS (HCA Hospice Care), ensuring a smooth transition of care for the patients and families.

Dr Tan is a member of the KTP-NUCMI Paediatrics Ethics and Advocacy Centre (PEACe), an operational unit that meets on a regular basis to discuss ethical issues concerning children.