

End of Life Care in the ICU: Variability between here and there...

“Health is that state of moral, mental and physical well-being which enables a person to face any crisis in life with the utmost grace and facility.” (Pericles, 5th Century BCE). Patients in the ICU are thus profoundly unhealthy; for the ICU physician everyone will receive care, though it’s a difficult question of who is receiving effective versus ineffective therapy.

This lecture forms part of a larger discussion by other ICU physicians about approaches to and variability between countries with regards to ICU end of life care (EOLC). A review of the literature with particular focus upon approaches to and differences between EOLC within Asia/Australasia will be the primary aim of this talk. Evidence of obviously ineffective versus uncertain ICU therapies will be examined when presented in the literature and areas of consensus and controversy will be highlighted.