

Parental Disagreement on Medical Treatment

Internet Enduring Material

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Content was originally presented as part of NEO: The Conference for Neonatology on February 26, 2026.

Accreditation

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Time to Complete

The estimated time for completion of this Internet Enduring Material is 50 minutes.

Target Audience

This presentation is intended for physicians, advanced practice providers, and other clinicians practicing within the Neonatology specialty.

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Disclosure of Relevant Financial Relationships

Mark Mercurio, MD, MBA, faculty for this educational activity, has no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose. *FDA Disclosure(s)*: none reported.

Timothy Biela, MD, Nicole Brenson and Jaya Sariga, NNP-BC, planners of this educational activity, have no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose.

Commercial Support

There is no commercial support for this enduring educational activity. *Please note: the content of this activity was originally presented at NEO: The Conference for Neonatology on February 26, 2026, which was supported in part, through a medical education grant from Mead Johnson Nutrition.*

Overview

This educational activity is designed to address a recognized practice gap in neonatal care: clinicians frequently lack a structured, ethically grounded approach for navigating situations in which parents disagree with one another about critical treatment decisions. The activity provides learners with a feasible framework for shared decision-making built on an understanding of rights, thresholds, and obligations, including the Impermissible-Permissible-Obligatory (I-P-O) scale, the zone of parental discretion, the role of prognostic data and feasibility, and the relevant rights of the child, parents, and others affected by the decision. At the conclusion of the activity, participants should be better able to analyze parental disagreement at the margins of the zone of parental discretion, weigh competing rights and relationships, interpret contemporary survival data for infants born at 22 weeks' gestation, and apply a proposed approach that prioritizes parental consensus while preparing a back-up plan when timely agreement cannot be reached.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this activity, the participant will be able to:

- Describe an ethical analysis of the problem of parental disagreement in critical decision-making.
- Identify a feasible and ethically defensible approach to parental disagreement regarding critical decisions in neonatology.

ACGME/ABMS Competencies

- Medical Knowledge
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Professionalism

IOM Competencies

- Provide Patient-Centered Care
- Work in Interdisciplinary Teams
- Employ Evidence-based Practice

Participation and Credit

Participants are expected to review all content in the video, access reference materials as needed for additional self-directed learning, take and score 75% or greater correct on the post-test, and complete the evaluation in order to earn *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)[™]*, or nursing contact hour(s).

There are no fees for participating in or receiving credit for this online educational activity. For information on the applicability and acceptance of credit for this activity, please consult your professional licensing board.

Contact

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at continuing.education@pediatrix.com