



Ethics

Children: Legal and Ethical Issues

Post-Assessment

Questions

Tony is a 15-year-old girl with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma that has reoccurred for the fifth time. Her last remission only lasted a few months and Tony is depressed and weakened by the therapy. At this point, her prognosis is very poor. Her parents remain positive and hopeful in Tony's presence, telling her that this time the doctors will find the right combination of chemotherapy and that they can always do full body radiation. Away from Tony's bedside, her parents are less upbeat, talking with the physicians about how long Tony might live. One day, when you are caring for Tony, she tells you that she wants to stop treatment but she doesn't want to disappoint her parents so she hasn't talked with them about that option.

1. Ideally, who has decision-making authority for Tony?
 - a. The primary physician, her oncologist.
 - b. Her father.
 - c. Her parents jointly.
 - d. Her parents give informed permission and Tony gives informed consent to her developmental capacity.

2. If you were the nurse in this situation, which two of the following would you reply to Tony's statement?
 - a. "You can't stop therapy, you are young and have so much to live for!"
 - b. "Your parents know what is best for you."
 - c. "To make the best decisions for you, do you think your parents need to know how you are feeling?"
 - d. "Why would it disappoint your parents if you were to stop treatment?"

Answers

1. Ideally, who has decision-making authority for Tony? **Answer:** D. Her parents give informed permission and Tony gives informed consent to her developmental capacity.
2. If you were the nurse in this situation, which two of the following would you reply to Tony's statement? **Answer: C & D.** "To make the best decisions for you, do you think your parents need to know how you are feeling?" And, "Why would it disappoint your parents if you were to stop treatment?"