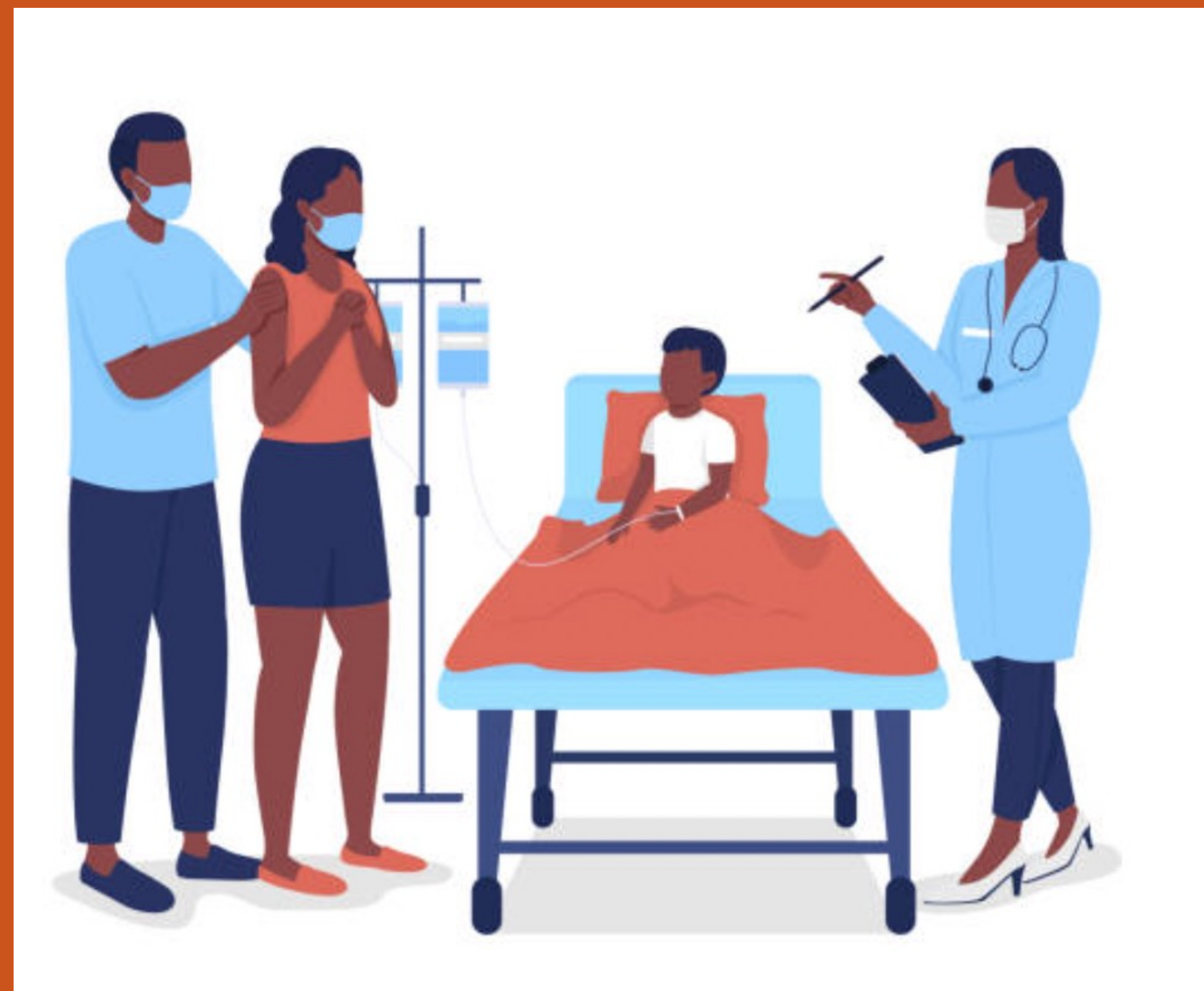


In a prior study, residents reported that they felt incompetent and uncomfortable communicating bad news, even after they'd had formalized palliative care training on the subjects¹.



1. McCabe ME, Hunt EA, Serwint JR. Pediatric Residents' Clinical and Educational Experiences With End-of-Life Care. *Pediatrics*. 2008;121(4):e731-e737. doi:10.1542/peds.2007-1657

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Developing a New Curriculum for Communication Training in Child Neurology

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Background

Communicating bad news is a difficult skill to learn for any resident and gets more complex in pediatric cases and when discussing complex neurological tests.

Residents in UCSF Child Neurology program self-identified a need for formalized training in complex communication with families.

Methods

1. Literature review revealed the benefits of simulation-based training for communication.
2. MedEdPortal provided a starting point for examples of good case construction.
3. Case scenarios were constructed to illustrate common areas of counseling difficulty, with the roles of parent, child, faculty member, and interpreter assigned as appropriate.
4. Interviews with expert faculty helped to shape best practices and sample explanations.

Results

A survey will be given pre- and post-intervention to collect residents' perceived competence and individual comfort level with discussing the following topics (7):

Brain Injury, Brain Death, Neuroprognostic Uncertainty, Declining Request for Excessive Workup, Functional Neurologic Disorder, MRI/EEG Findings, and Communicating Sensitive Information using an Interpreter

Conclusion

We expect that participating in the simulated conversations and discussion will allow the child neurology residents to feel more equipped to participate in and/or lead family meetings.

The major limitation in evaluating our curriculum's effectiveness will be the small class size (6). We hope to share our sample cases for common neurological topics by publishing in the MedEdPortal. Dr. Audrey Foster-Barber will also present the work to other program directors and educators at the annual Child Neurology Society meeting in October 2024. The curriculum will continue in the child neurology residency program at UCSF in future education sessions.

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