

## Life After the ICU: A Personal Experience

**Special Guest: G. Morgan Jones, PharmD, BCCCP, FCCM**

**What lessons did you learn from these experiences that you think we as pharmacists or ICU team members can do to help family members of our patients?**

- These experiences have changed the way Morgan practices critical care and there are a few key points that we all should integrate into our own practice.
  - Every word matters and can have long-term consequences
    - Our dedication to saving lives doesn't negate the responsibility to communicate respectfully with patients and their families
    - Patients and families deserve providers who focus not only on fixing what's wrong with them, but also those who understand the power that every interaction and every word carries after the patient is out of the ICU.
    - "We cannot change that which is true and sad. But, we can acknowledge it. We can humbly witness suffering and offer support." – Dr. Rana Awdish from "In Shock: My Journey from Death to Recovery and the Redemptive Power of Hope"
      - Should be required reading for all ICU team members
- Make a more conscious effort to view family members as part of the patient and have positive interactions with them
  - According to the current white paper regarding critical care pharmacy services, time for talking to patients and families isn't considered an essential task
    - That's a huge problem
  - Use your knowledge, skills, and expertise to help people gain an understanding.
  - We should feel empowered to stop and talk to family members about medication changes they hear us recommend on rounds

- Hearing from us directly may help them better understand what's going on
- Neurocritical care article Morgan referenced which was written by Morgan with a former patient's mother who was a high school English teacher  
[http://ezmag.documentation.com/NCS\\_Currents\\_June2017/page\\_14.html](http://ezmag.documentation.com/NCS_Currents_June2017/page_14.html)
- Someone has to care about costs
  - Costs can't control every decision we make, but financial considerations can be one of the most stressful aspects of ICU care for family members
  - We need to be stewards with our providers using the safest and most cost-effective therapy
    - We also need to be stewards of ourselves and ensure everything we are doing, and ordering is actually needed
- Needing help is not a failure, and we've got to do a better job of teaching people that.
  - The next generation of critical care pharmacists is watching us
    - We need to show them the job is challenging and that sometimes life makes it even harder
  - We encourage students and residents to open up and be vulnerable, but we as a profession aren't doing a great job of that.
  - Our accomplishments don't go away because we're admitting that we need help with one thing or another
    - Once we do that effectively, we as a profession will be able to help prepare people to channel their own struggles into better care and understanding for the patients we care for.