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November 24, 2020

## **CPSM Standard of Practice**

### **Withholding and Withdrawing Life-Sustaining Treatment**

#### **Public Health Emergency and Limitations on Resources Advisory**

CPSM recognizes the importance of its requirements of physicians in relation to decisions involving the withholding or withdrawing of life-sustaining treatment. It also understands the very difficult decisions to be made by physicians, particularly where there is no consensus between the patient or the patient's loved ones to withhold or withdraw treatment. Many patients or their loved ones will want every resource available to be devoted to the patient's recovery, regardless of the circumstances. Those individuals will expect strict adherence to the CPSM Standard of Practice such that they may participate in and challenge difficult decisions to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatment. Indeed, that is the reason for the requirements.

We are in the midst of a global pandemic and delivery of care has put an incredible strain on our health care system and the health care providers who are working tirelessly to provide care. It is not the role of CPSM to set the criteria for allocation of scarce resources in these circumstances.

CPSM recognizes that it may not be reasonably possible to adhere to all of the requirements of CPSM's Standard of Practice for Withholding and Withdrawing Life-Sustaining Treatment in the context of a public health emergency such as the COVID 19 global pandemic. If we reach the point that the demand on public health resources such as equipment and health care providers are stretched beyond reasonable limits, CPSM expects physicians to make decisions consistent with the spirit and intent of this Standard where possible, but recognizes that they must be guided by and adhere to institutional and/or public health requirements/directives as to how to best allocate limited resources. Those requirements/directives must take priority over the requirements of this Standard of Practice during the public health emergency.