

Ethics after Hours



The Pitt: 8am Drama

Summary:¹

Dr. Michael Robinovitch (Robby) is senior attending at the Emergency Department. In this second hour of his 12-hour shift, he sees Mr. Spencer, an elderly man who has been admitted with pneumonia. Mr. Spencer is in a critical condition. His two adult children are by his side. Mr. Spencer's wishes are known, and Robby outlines the possible next steps in a care plan for him. However, Mr. Spencer's children with this plan.

Later in the same episode, Robby breaks the news to the parents of a teenage boy, that their son is brain-dead after overdosing on Xanax and Fentanyl. In another part of the ED, Dr. Samira Mohan sees a patient in excruciating pain due to sickle cell disease.

Duration: 51 min.

Director: Amanda Marsalis

Available on Crave / Max

Ethics Themes:

End-of-life Care

Best interests

Breaking bad news

Advance Directives

Brain death

Stigma

Questions for discussion:

- Mr. Spencer has an advance directive. Why do you think his children are reluctant to follow it?
- Are there things Dr. Rabinovitch could have communicated differently or other actions he could have taken to support Mr. Spencer's children during the decision-making process?
- Do you think deviating from the advance directive would be in Mr. Spencer's best interest?
 - Why/why not?
 - Would you view it differently if Mr. Spencer were younger?
- Why do you think Dr. Rabinovitch agrees to do more tests on Nick after he has broken the bad news to his parents about Nick being brain dead?
- Discuss different aspects of Dr. Rabinovitch's approach that contribute to building good rapport and establishing trust between himself and Nick's parents.
- Dr. Mohan's patient describes how people often assume she has substance use disorder and is exaggerating her pain. How might these experiences impact the patient's health now and in the future?

¹ This is a summary of selected cases only, and not of the full second episode. The summary is adapted from [Wikipedia](#) and [IMDB](#).