

## Decision Guide Case Study No. 3

### Probable Pneumonia

#### Brief Case History

Mrs. Hong is an 81-year-old retired school teacher who was admitted to the hospital with exacerbation of COPD. Her past medical history includes advanced COPD (oxygen dependent), osteoarthritis, coronary artery disease, and congestive heart failure (CHF). She was transferred to your post-acute facility 5 days ago for rehab with the ultimate goal to return to living independently in the community in her single family home. She has never been admitted to post-acute care before and her family is very anxious about the quality of care she will receive. They expressed some concern about her being able to live independently and are asking about what to do. The hospital case manager told your admissions nurse that her family believes “nursing homes” are where people go to die and they don’t want their mother to die or to suffer. When asked about DNR status, the family state “we don’t want her to suffer and doesn’t DNR mean you will do nothing”?

#### Change in Condition

Two days after admission to your facility:

- The CNA notes that Mrs. Hong isn’t herself early in the morning that she is somewhat anxious, more short of breath, dyspneic and appears to be mildly confused.
- Mrs. Hong is not interested in breakfast and did not go to therapy.
- The Nurse Practitioner (NP) assessed the patient and concluded the patient has pneumonia that can be treated with antibiotics at the facility, but expressed concerns about Mrs. Hong’s advanced COPD and her ability to care for herself at home.
- The nurse practitioner called the family and they think she should go to the hospital because at least they can do something about her condition and address her living arrangements (get her some help in the home).

#### Case Study Analysis for Discussion:

- 1) Knowing this family is anxious, and using the Decision Guide as a tool, what is your next course of action in this case?
- 2) What key points would you discuss with Mrs. Hong and her family about their request for rehospitalization?
- 3) Hospice care for her advanced COPD may be the best option. Using the Guide what would you say to Mrs. Hong and her family?
- 4) Using the Guide what would be your response to the family about their statement “DNR means you won’t do anything to help her”.
- 5) Using information learned in the Decision Guide, what other actions could be taken to help prevent a hospital readmission?