Tumor Boards: The Influence of Social Hierarchy on Cancer Treatment Decision-making

Barbara Oureilidis-DeVivo, Ph.D., MBA
Westmont College

INTRODUCTION

Hospital tumor boards bring together medical professionals to deliberate the best treatment program for cancer patients. However, research has found that tumor boards do not fully achieve this goal. This study aims to explore these tumor boards, their decision-making process, and how different professional groups participate. Participants are interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. The study is approved by the IRB and conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

RESULTS

Key findings include:
1. Social hierarchy influences tumor board decision-making processes.
2. Surgeons dominate the decision-making process, often influencing outcomes.
3. Medical oncologists play a supporting role in the decision-making process.
4. Interventional radiologists often defer to surgeons.
5. Social hierarchy affects patient outcomes.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

These findings suggest that social hierarchy plays a significant role in tumor board decision-making. The implications of these findings for healthcare practice and research warrant further investigation.

REFERENCES