

Specific language important in heart failure communication

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(HealthDay)—Specific language is important for patient experience and

shared decision-making in heart failure, according to research published in the June 1 issue of *The American Journal of Cardiology*.

Anne M. Kelemen, from the MedStar Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C., and colleagues discuss the importance of communication between clinicians and patients with [heart failure](#).

The researchers note that, based on studies from patients with heart failure, when engaging in complex communication, specific language is important in [patient experience](#) and in shared decision-making with providers. Although clinical reports have outlined useful frameworks for communication, they have not yet discussed specific language for furthering holistic care, especially in the emotionally charged and complex areas of advancing disease and transitions to [end-of-life care](#). Specific language can be useful for communicating information to patients, including phrases such as: "the [specific [therapy](#)] is no longer working," instead of "you are failing the therapy;" "the therapy will not help you achieve your goal/s" instead of "you are not a candidate for the therapy;" and "focusing care on managing pain and symptoms of disease progression" rather than "keeping the patient comfortable."

"Specific phrasing may significantly impact patient experiences and outcomes," the authors write. "Communication that focuses on the disease itself and the therapy or intervention in question may help remove the patient from potential negative emotions, thus facilitating more objective shared decision-making with the clinician."

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