DEATH, DYING AND DELIVERING BAD NEWS: SIMULATION-BASED TRAINING, A NEW EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS. PJ Mosher¹, AA Murphy¹, JM Anderson¹, M Coyle¹, J McCauley¹, K Boyle¹, K Yaeger¹, N Iverson², LP Halamek¹. Department of Pediatrics, Stanford University School of Medicine, Palo Alto, CA. ²Department of Pediatrics, UCSF School of Medicine, San Francisco, CA.

**Purpose:** Medical school curricula and training with regard to the subjects of death, dying and delivering difficult news is currently limited, and was found to be insufficient in a recent survey of 2nd year medical students at Stanford University. We have developed a simulation-based training program in the delivery of bad news using realistic patient encounters in simulated hospital settings. The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of simulation-based training relative to traditional training in this area.

**Methods:** Ten preclinical students individually participated in a 3-hour training program consisting of two simulated patient encounters. One simulation required subjects to deliver news of a baby’s death to its mother, and the other required subjects to hold a conversation with an adult patient dying of pancreatic cancer. The simulations were videotaped and reviewed with simulator faculty (practicing MDs, RNs, and NNPs) providing constructive feedback about each subject’s performance (communication and behavioral skills). In between the two simulations, subjects were shown an instructional video on how to deliver difficult news. Subjects were given pre- and post-training questionnaires, addressing their attitudes regarding training in this area, and about simulation-based training as it compares to traditional curricular offerings on the topic of communication around death, dying and delivering difficult news.

**Results:** All 10 participants stated that simulation-based training is superior to traditional curricular offerings. All reported increased confidence with respect to speaking to a real dying patient in the hospital. All felt that simulation-based training is the most optimal method for training students to communicate with patients about death and dying. **Conclusions:** Traditional curricular offerings provide insufficient preparation for medical students with respect to communication on the subjects of death/dying and delivering difficult news. Simulation-based training is well received by medical students and leads to increased levels of confidence and skills in these areas.