

Common Medical-Legal Dilemmas in Cardiology

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Duty Owed
Duty Breached
Causation
Damage/Injury

Duty Owed

To Whom?
How Much?

Simply being a physician does
not create a duty.

A doctor-patient relationship
creates the duty.

A doctor-patient is created
when a doctor has contact
with a patient.

Scheduling an appointment

Appointment plus records?

Triage?

Curbside consult?

Cover me?

Take Home #1

When in doubt, take care
of the patient.

Duty Owed

To Whom?
How Much?

The Standard of Care

The Standard of Care

The best available combination
of risk and benefit

Take Home #2

The standard of care is always available and you can always deliver it.

Case

Presented with STEMI

Revascularized

Ready for discharge

Presented with STEMI

Revascularized

Ready for discharge

Life Vest?

ACC/SCAI/HRS

Take Home #3

Guidelines set the cornerstone
of the standard of care.

Presented with STEMI

Revascularized

Ready for discharge

You recommend Life Vest

Presented with STEMI

Revascularized

Ready for discharge

You recommend Life Vest

Patient says “No”

What is my obligation?

The Standard of Care

The best available combination
of risk and benefit

Take Home #4

A proper warning places the responsibility with the patient.

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