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
55 yr old white male

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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