

How Do Physicians Understand and Perceive “No Escalation of Treatment” Designations?

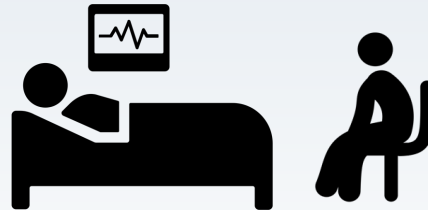
STUDY DESIGN

- **Qualitative study** at seven US hospitals, employing semi structured interviews with 30 physicians and review of relevant institutional records
- **At all hospitals**, participants reported the use of “No Escalation of Treatment” (NoET) designations, which were understood to mean that **providers should withhold new or higher-intensity interventions but not withdraw ongoing interventions**

RESULTS

Five functions of NoET were identified

1. **Defining** an intermediate point of treatment limitation



2. **Helping surrogate decision-makers** transition toward comfort care

3. Helping physicians **navigate prearrest** clinical decompensations

4. Preventing patient **harm** from invasive measures

5. **Conserving** critical care resources

NoET designations are used in a varied sample of hospitals and are perceived as having multiple functions, suggesting they may fulfill an important need in the care of critically ill patients, especially at the end of life.