

10:15 am - 11:45 am

Concurrent Session 1G

**\*Is My Sister Dying? Supporting Siblings of Children  
with Medical Complexities and Their Families Throughout the Progression of  
Disease**

\*1.5 hours for Social Work CEU's will be given for this session.

In-Person Only

**Summary:**

No parent expects to have a child with medical complexities. While parents and caregivers go through their own grief and process, often times the siblings of the sick child can be overlooked. There is significant research around children with siblings with pediatric cancer and the long-term effects on the family unit. What we aim to do in this presentation is talk about another population, the siblings of children with chronic medical conditions who live in long-term nursing care facilities. We will look at how the clinical team can support the entire family unit and approach medical questions in developmentally appropriate ways. We aim to assist the practitioner in the importance of group dynamics and community building. Two case studies will be compared on fostering relationships and supportive coping through play and psychoeducation.

**Objectives:**

1. The learner will gain skills on how to communicate in a developmentally appropriate way to facilitate relationship building amongst children and their medically complex siblings
2. The learner will be able to discuss and utilize the benefits of community building amongst families who experience the challenge of having a medically complex child
3. The learner will be educated on the importance of demystifying hospital life and equipment for children to alleviate misconceptions and fear
4. The learner will gain skills around how to help children grieve the loss of a sibling

**Presenters:**

Jacob Portnoy, CCLS, St. Mary's Hospital for Children

Dori Resnick, LMSW, St. Mary's Hospital for Children