

Nurit Harari, M.D., is a second-year resident, born in Israel, raised in Texas, preparing for a career in pediatrics/internal medicine.



MOMENTS IN MEDICINE AT MICHIGAN

“One of the things that I’m still struggling with is life and death issues. Every day.”

“The first rotation I did last year was adult hematology/oncology. It was really tough because everybody I saw in the hospital was either a new diagnosis or in an end-of-life situation. It was the first time I certified a death.

“I remember especially a very busy night. I was called at 3:00 a.m. It was a man who was expected to die, and his wife was there. And one thing I learned quickly was that the nurses are pretty adamant about you certifying the death. But my feeling in that instance was, what’s the difference if I do it now or 30 minutes from now? The man’s wife wanted to spend some time with him after he died. So I went into the room but just said, ‘Page me when you’re ready, after you’ve had some time.’ And then I came back.

“Later on when she was signing the papers, she told me they had lost a son in a traumatic accident and before her husband passed away that night, they had talked about their son. He told her that he was going to meet their son and they’d wait for her. And while she was talking about it she didn’t cry. She said, ‘I look all together, don’t I? But the second I get in the car, I know I’m going to lose it.’

“You know, because you’re so busy during the night you don’t have time to process it as much. But that night it definitely affected me, especially when she told me about her son. But I didn’t really cry. Not till the next day.”

—WH