with patients accessing the most appropriate clinician for their current needs.

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165 IMPROVING CARE OF PATIENTS WITH TERMINAL AGITATION (TA) AT END OF LIFE AT LEEDS TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

Claire Iwaniszak, Elizabeth Rees, Rachael Meal, Anna Winfield, Craig Pattison, Katie Hodge, Suzanne Kite. *Leeds Teaching Hospitals*

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Aim Our multidisciplinary team quality improvement project aimed to ensure that all dying patients who experience TA have an effective individualised plan of care on an acute stroke ward (L21) within a tertiary centre.

Background Leeds Teaching Hospitals was selected to be one of 10 hospitals to be part of the national 'Building on the Best Programme' in conjunction with Hospice UK, Macmillan, NHSE and NHSI. This was to build on what was already being achieved by hospitals to improve the quality of end of life care (EOLC). Often improvement work focuses on the management of pain and we wanted to focus on improving the care of patients with TA, a symptom found in up to 90% of dying patients, but not always focused on.

Methods This work was led by the Palliative Care team in conjunction with the frontline team on L21. A driver diagram was produced to identify key areas of focus (FIG 1). Interventions included ward-based role modelling of expert care of the dying; (this included the recognition, assessment, care planning and evaluation of interventions for patients experiencing TA), ward-based teaching, display and presentation of improvement data and discussion of dying patients in safety huddles. Run charts were created for these initiatives, with baseline data pre-intervention and on-going data collection during the testing, implementation and sustainability phases. All interventions were developed following identification of gaps in care delivery/evaluation.

Results Run charts (FIG 2–4) demonstrated statistically significant improvements in the rate of assessment, reassessment and evaluation of terminal agitation ($p < 0.05$). Routine review and dissemination of data with the frontline teams in these initiatives enhanced collaborative engagement, motivation and success.

Conclusion Through collaborative working and ward-based role modelling we have demonstrated it is possible to improve the overall management of this challenging symptom in terminal care.

166 PUT UP WITH DYSGEUSIA... I DON'T 'ZINC' SO!

Juliet McCormack, Matthew Curtis. *Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust*

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Background Taste or gustatory dysfunctions are implicated in loss of appetite, unintended weight loss, malnutrition and reduced quality of life. The benefits of Zinc supplementation for dysgeusia have been documented for the past 20 years with moderate quality supportive evidence available.

Improvements in taste have been demonstrated in patients receiving chemoradiotherapy and in those with idiopathic taste loss. However, this approach does not appear to be part of routine practice.

Aims We present a case study of a patient experiencing dysgeusia who was successfully treated with zinc supplementation and lifestyle changes.

Case study description 60 year old patient with a uterine carcinoma receiving Sirolimus treatment. She described extreme taste sensation changes within 1 month of commencing the Sirolimus; foods tasted too salty with an accompanying overwhelming metallic taste. This severely impacted upon her enjoyment of food with reduced appetite, associated weight loss, fatigue and social withdrawal.

Physical examination of the oral cavity showed no evidence of infection, ulcers or candidiasis. Zinc supplementation was commenced alongside routine advice including regular oral hygiene, dietary changes and cooking techniques.

Results Specific taste change improvements occurred within 3 weeks with reduction in the salty and metallic tastes. This resulted in improved appetite and tolerance of a wider variety of foods. During subsequent weeks, alongside immunotherapy, there was continued improvement in appetite, enjoyment of eating and quality of life.

Conclusion Although not routine clinical practice, this case demonstrates how inexpensive mineral supplementation can improve dysgeusia and supported tolerance of immunotherapy.

Based on this case, we plan to review our palliative care caseload to identify prevalence of this symptom. Our intention would be to then develop an approach to further research this intervention. The research hypothesis is that zinc supplementation plus lifestyle changes is superior to lifestyle changes alone for dysgeusia in palliative care.

167 METHYLPHENIDATE FOR DEPRESSION IN PALLIATIVE CARE – WHAT'S NEW?

Angela Star, Bridget Candy, Louise Jones, Adrian Tookman, Michael King, Paddy Stone. *Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Unit, Department of Mental Health Sciences, Royal Free & University College Medical School*

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Background Symptoms of depression (SDEP) are common; antidepressants are not always effective or appropriate, especially in palliative care (PC) cohorts (where the priority is timely effect). Methylphenidate, a psychostimulant, may offer an alternative. The related 2008 Cochrane review¹ contained a heterogeneous group of trials and was inconclusive. New trial data has become available.

Aim To evaluate via systematic review the effectiveness and safety of methylphenidate (single-agent or adjunct) in treating depression and SDEP in adults who have advanced medical conditions or are receiving PC.

Methods We searched published papers of randomised controlled trials (RCTs) in any language from 2006-present on key online databases, manufacturer's trial listings, reference searching, and personal communication. Citations were screened in duplicate. Trials meeting criteria were collated with relevant RCTs from the previous review.¹ Cohorts with traumatic brain injury were excluded.

The primary outcome measures were: effect of MPD on overall SDEP (at days 7 and 28), and adverse events (AEs). Where homogeneity allowed, meta-analysis was planned.