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THE AYRSHIRE AND ARRAN NURSES WITH SPECIALIST INTEREST IN PALLIATIVE CARE PROJECT: THE ROLE OF THE HOSPICE AS A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2014-000654.205

Living and Dying Well: A National Action Plan for Palliative and End of Life Care in Scotland (Scottish Government 2008) highlighted that optimal palliative care provision was highly dependent on professional carers' knowledge and skills. However, even though nurses that have most contact with dying people and their families their knowledge and skills in palliative care can be poor (Stevens 2009). To improve the quality of palliative care provision in both community and hospital settings NHS Ayrshire & Arran in conjunction with The University of the West of Scotland and Ayrshire Hospice re-modelled an academic palliative care course to provide nurses in key clinical positions with the knowledge and skills to influence and provide optimal palliative care within their own clinical environment. These "Nurses with a Specialist Interest in Palliative Care" undertook a 12 week course which involved a blend of online learning and a 30 hour clinical placement within specialist palliative care. The poster will present a short rationale for the project and highlight the selection criteria for the Nurses before presenting the role of the hospice as a learning environment. The usefulness of the placement will be discussed utilising the Nurses' own evaluations as well as the independent evaluation of the project commissioned by the funder of the project Macmillan Cancer Support.

REFERENCES

- 1 Scottish Government (2008) Living & Dying Well: A National Action plan for Palliative and End of Life in Scotland. Scottish Government, Edinburgh.
- 2 Stevens E (2009) Palliative Nursing Education and Professional Development. In Stevens E, Jackson S, Milligan S (eds). *Palliative Nursing: Across the Spectrum of Care*. John Wiley, Chichester.