simultaneously. The most commonly used strategies included opioid discontinuation or reduction, adding the NMDA receptor antagonist methadone, or opioid rotation, most commonly to an opioid with a lower equivalent dose. The most effective strategies for managing OIH were opioid dose reduction, opioid rotation and discontinuation of opioid.

Conclusions Reasonable approaches to manage patients suspected of having OIH include reduction of opioid dose, discontinuation of opioid, opioid rotation, or instituting multimodal analgesia with adjuvant therapies such as the NMDA receptor antagonist methadone, and spinal anaesthetic techniques where appropriate.

20 ORAL NALTREXONE FOR THE TREATMENT OF CHOLESTATIC ITCH

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Background Cholestatic itch is caused by intra-hepatic liver diseases such as primary biliary cirrhosis, and extra-hepatic obstruction of the biliary tree, often caused by tumours. The pathophysiology of cholestatic itch is complex and no single treatment has proved definitive. Naltrexone is an opioid receptor antagonist, which reduces central opioidergic tone, believed to be raised in patients with cholestatic pruritis.

Aim To review and assess the efficacy of oral naltrexone for the treatment of cholestatic itch.

Methods Search of electronic databases, grey literature, clinical trials registries and handsearching for studies including naltrexone for cholestatic itch. Full papers were obtained if relevant and studies graded.

Results 13 papers were included in the analysis, including 3 randomised controlled trials, 1 controlled clinical trial, 1 open-label pilot study, 7 case reports and 1 retrospective notes review. All studies found naltrexone to be effective in relieving pruritis. In all 5 studies performing statistical analysis, naltrexone significantly reduced pruritis compared to baseline. 37% of patients reported side effects, notably opioid withdrawal-type reactions and recurrence of previous pain, from all pathologies.

Conclusions Oral naltrexone therapy helps relieve cholestatic itch and although it should be used with caution in patients using exogenous opioids for analgesia, it should be considered when treating refractory pruritis in patients with end-stage liver disease.

21 THE PREVALENCE OF SYMPTOMS IN INTENSIVE CARE UNIT PATIENTS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND META-ANALYSIS

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Background There is increasing international recognition of the importance of palliative care for all intensive care unit (ICU) patients regardless of prognosis. The palliative care needs of ICU patients are largely unknown but individual studies focused on specific groups have indicated a high symptom prevalence. In order to target interventions effectively, a greater understanding of symptom burden is needed.

Aims To determine the prevalence of physical, psychological and spiritual symptoms experienced by ICU patients.

Methods Six electronic databases were searched from inception to 2018. The concepts 'intensive care', 'symptoms' and 'prevalence' were used to identify quantitative studies that reported data on the prevalence of three or more symptoms in adult ICU patients with any diagnosis. Additional data sources included Google Scholar and reference list and citation searches of all included studies. Prevalence was documented for each symptom identified. When raw data permitted, random-effects meta-analysis with double arcine transformation was used to calculate pooled prevalence estimates and 95% confidence intervals. Heterogeneity was assessed using the I² statistic.

Results Fourteen studies were included, providing data from 1602 ICU patients. In total, 31 physical, 11 psychological and two spiritual symptoms were identified. Pain, dyspnoea and anxiety were the most frequently described. Ten studies contributed to the meta-analysis, which was performed for fifteen symptoms. The most prevalent symptoms were fatigue (95%; 95% confidence interval 90–98), dyspnoea (77%; 61–89), anxiety (76%; 52–94), anorexia (70%; 31–97) depression (68%; 43–89), drowsiness (67%; 42–88), thirst (66%; 43–86) and pain (54%; 35–73). Wide confidence intervals and high I² values signified considerable heterogeneity.

Conclusion ICU patients experienced a significant symptom burden and were not adequately symptom controlled. The heterogeneity observed influences the validity and generalisability of the results. However, despite limitations, this review provides a valuable insight into the unmet palliative care needs of ICU patients.

Poster presentations

Bereavement | Poster 1

1 COMMUNITY BEREAVEMENT SERVICES IN THE NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND: IMPROVING AWARENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY

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10.1136/spcare-2020-PCC.22

Background Despite national guidelines highlighting the importance of Bereavement support, research suggests that this continues to be provided inconsistently. Concerns were raised by General Practitioners (GPs) regionally about lack of Bereavement support services. A region wide survey found that GPs referred or sign-posted their patients to multiple different services. 21% of respondents did not refer patients as they were unsure about current services within their locality. This demonstrated a need for a review and mapping of the available services to increase awareness and accessibility.

Methods A Freedom of Information request was sent via email to 36 services in North East England who may provide Bereavement support. This list was generated from services GPs identified in the previous project, all North East hospices and services in the region provided by the mental health charity Mind. Information requested included the number of

referrals, access to services (including self-referral), referral criteria and waiting times.

Results Responses were gained from 26 services. Twelve offered Bereavement specific services and eight of these were hospices. From the total responses, only 47% of services that GPs had referred to offered Bereavement specific support. Three of the hospices only accepted referrals if the person had a prior connection to the hospice but most services had no specific criteria apart from age restrictions (i.e. they offered support to adults only). All services accepted self-referrals (except for children where consent was required) or from a healthcare professional including GPs. Number of referrals to each service in 2018 varied widely from 81 to 1522. Waiting time on average was 50 days.

Conclusions This evaluation mapped community Bereavement support services in the North East of England. It will be essential to ensure referrers develop knowledge of who, when, and how to refer to Bereavement services going forward

Caregivers and the family | posters 2 – 5

2 CAREGIVER BURDEN AND HEALTH STATUS PERCEPTION OF FAMILY CAREGIVERS OF PATIENTS RECEIVING PALLIATIVE CARE AT HOME

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Introduction The aim of this study was to explore the repercussions associated with caregiving of patients who receive palliative care at home due to an oncological disease through the assessment of the health status self-perception in the last year, the presence of anxiety and depressive symptoms and the assessment of caregiving burden.

Method Design: Descriptive, cross-sectional study. Sample: family caregivers of patients with oncological disease who are under the follow-up of a home palliative care program hospital-based. Period: July 2015 and December 2016. Analysis: descriptive statistics. Questionnaires: Goldberg anxiety and depression scale; Zarit Caregiver Overload Scale in reduced version

Results 80 family caregivers were included in the study. 56 (70%) were women and 24 (30%) men, with a mean age of 61.75 years (SD=12.98). 52.5% of the family caregivers assessed negatively affect their health status in the last year (regular, bad or very bad) while 47.5% valued it positively (good or very good). 48 caregivers presented symptoms of possible anxiety diagnosis, and 36 caregivers symptoms of possible diagnosis of depression.

The risk of claudication due to caregiver's burden was assessed in 57 caregivers. The average score was 14.95 on the Zarit Scale (short version). 16 caregivers (20%) presented claudication risk criteria. The results showed a significant positive association between age ($r=0.316$; $p=0.008$), anxiety symptoms ($r=0.333$; $p=0.005$), care overload ($r=0.277$; $p=0.037$) and the worst health status perception.

Conclusion In the sample studied, the family members who take care presented a worse perception of their health status, higher levels of anxiety and a greater perception of care overload.

3 PALLIATIVE CARE AT HOME IN PATIENTS WITH ONCOLOGICAL DISEASES: TRENDS IN CHARACTERISTICS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PRIMARY FAMILY CAREGIVER

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10.1136/spcare-2020-PCC.24

Introduction This study aims to describe the characteristics and circumstances related to caregiving at home of family caregivers of people receiving palliative care at home due to cancer disease.

Method Design: Descriptive, cross-sectional study. Sample: family caregivers of people in follow-up in the home care program. Period: July/2015 to December/2016. Variables: sociodemographic data, characteristics of the role of caregiver as previous experience caring, reasons for caring, living together, simultaneous care of other people, care environment preferences, perception of the relationship, time and hours assuming care.

Results The sample was made up of a total of 80 relatives, 56 (70%) were women and 24 (30%) men, with a mean age of 61.75 years (SD=12.98). 55.7% of them had primary education, 45% were a pensioner followed by 23.8% who said they were working. The degree of kinship was spouse/partner (48.8%) followed by daughter (42.5%). 92.5% of caregivers identified themselves as primary caregivers while 7.5% were sole caregivers. In most cases (76.3%) they resided at the same address. In 30% of cases, caregivers also treated other dependents besides the patient. The main reasons for caregiving described were: own initiative (47.5%) and feeling obligated (36.3%). For 40% of the caregivers it was the first experience of caring. The average time caring was 12.98 months (SD=21.41), the average of hours caring per week 38.29 (SD=20.66). 53.8% of caregivers described their relationship with the patient as very intimate, however 25% of them identified that the relationship had worsened.

Conclusions In home palliative care scenarios, knowing the circumstances of caregivers and caregiving environment could contribute to recognize and support family caregiving.

4 AN EVALUATION OF THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS WITHIN THE PATIENT POPULATION OF A PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICE

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10.1136/spcare-2020-PCC.25

Background In an emergency, medical professionals need urgent access to patient information. Patients can share information via the Message in a Bottle (MIAB) scheme or via the 'emergency contacts' feature on their smartphone.

Objectives The first objective was to find out if patients receiving specialist palliative care use the MIAB scheme, or their smartphones, to store and share health information. The second objective was to increase the use of these methods to share information. The third objective was to make the use of these methods' routine, beyond the end of this project.