study of domestic staff but found no research into the experiences of catering staff, a team who play a vital patient facing role within our hospice.

**Aim** To explore hospice catering staff’s experiences of patient interactions on the inpatient unit (IPU): to better understand these interactions and what support is required.

**Methods** An online questionnaire was sent to all catering staff at our three Hospice IPUs in October 2019. Consisting of 18 closed and 7 open questions, it was adapted from Jors (2017). It was made available for 1 month, with the results then analysed on Excel.

**Results** The response rate was 52% (12/23). All respondents felt providing support for patients was an important aspect of their role. 75% spent at least 15 minutes per shift speaking to patients. 75% spoke to patients about their illness at least once a week, with the same proportion speaking about death and dying at least once a week. However, whilst staff felt confident and well trained to discuss food and drink, the reverse was true when it came to discussing illness or dying. Time pressures and limited communication with the IPU team were highlighted as difficulties.

**Conclusions** Our findings are similar to those of Jors (2017) study of domestic staff. We found that our catering staff have regular patient contact and that they value time spent with patients. These interactions often go beyond addressing nutritional needs, even though this is not a formal part of their role. We will present suggestions for supporting staff when these conversations occur and suggestions for further research into this area.

**REFERENCE**