DYING TO KNOW: A PILOT TO DELIVER PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM ON DEATH AND BEREAVEMENT IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN GATESHEAD

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Introduction The aim of the Dying to Know project was to improve young people’s engagement with key issues surrounding death, dying and bereavement in order to better equip them to deal with life experiences. The Specialist Palliative Care Team (SPCT) at Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust collaborated with Emmanuel College in Gateshead to develop a personal development curriculum on the subject.

Methods Over a 6-month period in 2022, teachers and palliative care professionals delivered lectures and tutorials for 190 young people aged 14–16. Students and teachers were surveyed before and after the programme using free text responses and Likert scales.

Results The post-intervention survey was completed by 189 of the 190 pupils at the end of 2022. Of the 114 free text comments, 49% were positive, including the sessions being informative (43%) recognising the importance of talking about dying (12%) and increasing levels of comfort (4%). 31% of students disliked the title, 10% criticised the emotional response it caused, 10% were not interested in the programme and 5% did not like the lecture format. All teachers thought the programme should be continued.

Conclusions We successfully developed and delivered a teaching programme on death and dying to secondary school pupils. Based on feedback from students and teachers, we plan to revise some content and the name, then expand to other schools. Changing the lectures to video format will improve reproducibility and have less impact on SPCT time. Showing them to 3 different year groups will expand to other schools. Changing the lectures to video format will improve reproducibility and have less impact on SPCT time. Supported by a drop in mental capacity throughout the trust by the Transforming End of Life Care team. A deep dive into the potential barriers to developing a shared understanding about care for the dying patient and manage them at home. The specialist hub and stakeholder teams. This project was established to enhance the confidence of London Ambulance Service clinicians who are increasingly required to attend dying patients, and manage them at home. The ‘stakeholders’ were all grades of ambulance clinicians. The hub consisted of a palliative physician and nurse, a care home matron, a GP plus two end of life leaders from London Ambulance Service (LAS) and an administrative partner (MyHealth Hillingdon).

Method The curriculum was collaboratively agreed with LAS. Topics included understanding the palliative approach, ethical decision-making, symptom control for those patients who want to stay at home, emergencies at the end of life, communication challenges and family dynamics. Structure included brief didactic learning, real-time polls and case presentations by ambulance clinicians.

Results Engagement has been huge with over 200 ambulance clinicians engaging with the first three ECHO sessions. Initial themes from the contemporaneous realist evaluation using Slido demonstrate key changes in attitude, knowledge gaps, confidence and engagement.

Learnings as the following: