

Secondly, understanding family dynamics and children's needs, including knowledge of how children grieve and process information, was important in order to support the child at home. Professionals advocated for the children's need to know what was occurring with their parent. However, time constraints and limited resources affected their ability to engage children. There was little formal training on communicating with children, with professionals largely drawing on prior experience or doing their own research.

Thirdly, professionals embraced their own vulnerability. They experienced countertransference, and most were intentional about self-care. While there was fear of making things worse for children, there was a sense of fulfillment and comfort in being of assistance.

Discussion Professionals showed awareness of the emotional toll, and vicarious post-traumatic growth was also evident in some. There was significant countertransference, mostly in for those who were themselves parents of young children. Parentified children who were caregivers causes significant distress to the Professionals.

Significance There is a need for better organizational support to manage emotional toll and time constraints. More specialized training and resources are required, as well as enhanced partnerships with external agencies to better support affected children. Findings can contribute to the development of an interdisciplinary project aiming to address these issues.

OP-24

EMBRACE: MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF LIVING WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS, A FEASIBILITY STUDY

¹Melanie Lovell*, ¹Kerry Warner, ¹Peter Archer, ¹Rebecca McCabe, ¹Phillip Siddall. ¹Hammondcare, Sydney, Australia; ²Northern Clinical School, University of Sydney, Sydney Australia

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Background People with serious illness face multiple losses which necessitates a new way of living. Many experience a loss of meaning and purpose. There is a need for interventions to support people exploring opportunities for growth despite their changed circumstances.

Aim to develop and test the feasibility of an intervention that is based on the principles of posttraumatic growth and seeks to foster a stronger sense of meaning and purpose and that is relevant and appropriate to palliative care settings.

Methods Using participatory action research methodology, the intervention was designed in an iterative process with both health professionals and people with lived experience of a terminal illness. Further feedback from program participants and facilitators was then used to modify and refine the program before finalisation. The face to face group program was pilot tested over six weekly sessions each for two hours. Outcome measures include the Symptom Assessment Scale, FACIT-Sp, HADS and a qualitative interview. Ethics approval was obtained. Qualitative analysis was conducted using framework analysis.

Results Three major themes:

Engagement; Self-reflection and Empowerment.

Engagement

The theme of 'Engagement' describes how participants interact with others, both in taking part in the program and with family or other people during the course of their illness. Group interaction during the program demonstrated the care participants showed towards each other e.g. dealing with the

expression of emotion; trust was demonstrated by how participants allowed themselves to display emotion as they knew their fellow group members would understand their situation.

Self-reflection

The theme of 'Self-reflection' in response to the program offered participants an opportunity to listen to other participants' stories and consider their own situation. In particular, many commented on how, despite perceiving individual differences, they could learn from the similarities of their shared experiences. Many participants were open to learning more about how to manage differently while living with serious illness, however some participants felt this was not possible. Self-reflection and being open to learning allowed participants to consider alternative views about what was important in each individual's life and one's capacity to make changes to live life in a positive manner for the benefit of the individual, their family and friends.

Empowerment

The theme of 'Empowerment' describes the realisation that participants are able to manage their life differently in a way that still has meaning and purpose. Prioritising, making choices, and setting differently configured goals for oneself became ways of living with purpose and hope. Through self-reflection and discussion with others, many participants stated how they now felt they were better able to discuss and prepare for the future with close family and friends, with some stating a new found purpose and/or determination to benefit others while the participant is able.

Conclusions The Embrace program shows promise at addressing the widespread challenge of finding new sources of meaning and purpose for those living with serious illness.

OP-25

IMPROVING PARALLEL PLANNING IN TRISOMY 18 AND 13

Christine Mott*. *Acorns Children's Hospices and Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Trust, Solihull UK*

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Background West Midlands Perinatal Palliative Care Service (WMPPCS) is the busiest such service in the United Kingdom with 62 referrals for the 12 months 2023 to 2024 to date. A large cohort of babies with Trisomy 18 and 13 are referred to this service. These conditions are associated with poor outcomes such that colloquially has been described as 'incompatible with life'. Increasingly services involved are recognising a variety of outcomes though, and questions about what interventions should be offered are being raised. Parallel planning varies and may or may not include offers of a doctor attending delivery, subspecialist review, access to respiratory support, access to Neonatal Intensive Care Units and surgical intervention. This balance between recognising potential to survive and need best possible care, and poor average survival makes care complex to navigate.

Objectives We reviewed the number of babies with a trisomy 18 or 13 diagnosis referred to the service and reviewed what service was provided, what interventions were undertaken and for those babies that died what their length of survival was. Using this information we hope to broaden understanding of possible outcomes and precedent clinical journeys to improve and provide consistency in parallel planning for these babies.