IMPROVING HOME DEATH DOWN UNDER

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Background: The rate of home death of palliative care patients in a Melbourne community based palliative care service has decreased over the last few years. As a result, the service has initiated a 6 month Structured Support Programme (SSP) intervention, completed in November 2012, encompassing a three visit platform of support which will be provided by a Nurse Practitioner Candidate (NPC). Preliminary results will be discussed in this presentation.

Aim: Overall, this study aimed to determine whether a SSP provided by an advanced practice nurse can improve outcomes for patient and caregivers at home compared to regular support from the nursing team. Specific aims are to: improve symptom relief for patients, enhance psychosocial support for patient and carers, facilitate place of death according to patient and carer wishes and articulate a Nurse Practitioner (NP) model supporting complex End of Life (EOL) care.

Methods: The SSP provided by the NPC established both patient and carer needs, from which an anticipatory care plan was developed to provide a platform of future support for the patient and the carer.

Results: 47% of patients who had the SSP died at home compared to 33% who did not. 60% of patients who had the SSP died where they wished compared to 33% who did not.

Discussion: This intervention was provided by a NPC, it was possible to identify where an endorsed NP would enhance access to medications

Conclusion: A SSP provided by an advanced practice nurse can improve outcomes for patient and caregivers at home.