**RESEARCHING AN INNOVATIVE COTTAGE HOSPICE MODEL OF CARE: AN ACADEMIC AND HOSPICE PARTNERSHIP**

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2017-hospice.12

**Background** Exploring innovative models of hospice, palliative end and of life care is imperative to meet contemporary demands in caring for those approaching the end of life. To this end, a new Cottage Hospice model is being developed in the south of England. The hospice concerned commissioned a concurrent two-year research study to track the programme development. This addresses the call for hospices to work with academics in determining which types of care work best (Payne, Preston, Turner, & Rolls, 2013).

**Aim** To evaluate the development of Cottage Hospice using a research approach where solutions to challenges are developed collaboratively with a range of stakeholders. Results from this work will assist decision making as the programme proceeds.

**Methods** Participatory Action Research is being used to evaluate the programme. A situational analysis using documents (n=77) and interviews (n=25) explored the programmes foundations. Action cycles (n=4–8) in which issues are worked on in small groups to reach agreed solutions followed the initial phase. Findings will be fed back to stakeholders in workshops to share and refine results.

**Results** Initial results demonstrate a need for conceptual clarity about the model to be sought between staff, volunteers and service users in order to achieve a shared vision and support for the programme. Action cycles to address conceptual understandings and practical issues including staffing and family caregiver role are underway. It is anticipated that these will highlight areas for further action cycles.

**Conclusions** The early involvement of an academic research team in evaluating a new model of hospice care represents an embedded and enlightened approach in which research is not an afterthought. We believe this strengthens the basis for this new initiative. Gaining an in-depth, evidence based understanding of how challenges were resolved in the implementation of Cottage Hospice may be of use to others in the sector planning similar initiatives.

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**PARALLEL SESSION 4: SHARING CARE: DIFFERENT WAYS OF WORKING**

**THE ROLE OF THE CONSULTANT RADIOGRAPHER IN PALLIATIVE RADIOTHERAPY**

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2017-hospice.13

**Introduction** Palliative patients account for 25% of the radiotherapy department’s workload, however, many of these patients are not end of life and may live for years with a cancer diagnosis. Historically, they had a long wait to see consultant clinical oncologists and receive radiotherapy for their symptoms (the most common of which is pain) (Jones et al., 2014).

**Aims** To assess patients individually in terms of suitability for palliative radiotherapy. Promote awareness of palliative radiotherapy as a treatment option in managing metastatic cancer as a complex long term condition. Reduce length of stay and admissions. Holistic pain management – liaising with palliative care teams in the community (Farrell, Merkley, & Ingar, 2013).

**Methods** Action research was employed in a concurrent two-year study to track the development of a palliative MDT group including radiotherapists, dosimetrists and clinical oncologists is in place to assess the efficacy of the service.

**Results** A streamlined, direct referral process has been developed demonstrating continuity of care whilst educating staff, patients, families and carers on the use of palliative radiotherapy in the treatment of metastatic cancer. Pain is managed in a timely manner and optimised before radiotherapy treatment allowing a reduction in pain flare side effects.

**Conclusion** This work has highlighted the complex nature of palliative radiotherapy in the management of cancer but enables patients to access timely symptom control. Furthermore, development of a palliative MDT group including radiographers, dosimetrists and clinical oncologists is in place to assess the efficacy of the service.