TO FEED OR NOT TO FEED

10.1136/bmjspcare-2017-hospice.141

**Background** It is well known that swallowing problems are a common symptom in palliative care patients (Bogaardt et al., 2015). The emotional, physiological and psychological impact of swallowing problems cannot be underestimated on the patient, their families and carers.

**Aims** To reduce the impact of swallowing difficulties by ensuring patients can eat and drink safely, efficiently and nutritiously.

To develop and roll out a training programme for health-care professionals involved in the preparation, formation and delivery of modified diets/fluids.

**Method** A collaborative working party including Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), Dietetics, Catering and Housekeeping was set up to review and improve the modified diets and fluids that are offered to our patients with swallowing difficulties. The review included patient and staff feedback and focused on consistency, appearance, taste and texture. As a multi-disciplinary team, each discipline provided a different knowledge base: SLT focusing on swallowing safety, Dietician focusing on nutritional content, Catering with the preparation and cooking of the food and Housekeeping with food presentation.

**Results** A new puree menu has been developed with standardised texture and consistency with the use of puree moulds to improve appearance. A daily smoothie round is now offered to our inpatients and day hospice. A formal evaluation is in progress. Initial feedback from patients and staff has been positive. ‘It looked like chicken and even tasted like chicken. This is the first puree meal I have actually enjoyed!’

A training programme on modified diets was developed and is being delivered on a rolling basis.

**Conclusions** We believe by evaluating and improving our modified diets and fluids that are offered to patients with swallowing difficulties, these patients can continue to eat and drink safely and nutritiously through the development of an innovative new modified diet menu thus reducing the distress that can be caused by the impact of these difficulties.

PLANT: ‘PALLIATIVE LIFE-STATE & NUTRITION TOOL’© – A PROTOTYPE TOOL

Eleni Tsiompanou. Woking and Sam Beare Hospices, London, UK.
10.1136/bmjspcare-2017-hospice.142

**Background** Previous work by the author and, in collaboration with the Food and Nutrition Group at Hospice UK and the Department of Nutrition at the University of Surrey, highlighted the need for a specialist nutrition tool in palliative care. Nutrition can be influenced by disease and treatment-related factors as well as emotional, social and cultural factors. In addition, food allergies/intolerances and preferences should be taken into account when offering food or dietary advice.

**Method** The prototype PLANT was designed and developed in the last two years with the feedback of patients, doctors, nurses and dietitians. It has two parts: a patient questionnaire and a clinical assessment. It has been used in different settings.

**Results** PLANT is a practical tool that can be used in the hospice, community and outpatient settings. It can:
- identify potentially reversible causes (such as pain, nausea, constipation etc) which can influence the patient’s food intake and nutritional status
- highlight specific food and nutritional needs that can be translated into care plans
- facilitate communication between multidisciplinary team members
- assist healthcare professionals in estimating survival of patient.

**Conclusions** Nutritional and wellbeing status should be assessed, except if patients are within the last days of life (dying phase of illness). The PLANT tool, by taking into account aspects of life-state and food and nutrition, supports healthcare professionals in their history-taking and decision-making, to provide better care. There are a number of challenges for its use, such as changing practice, introducing yet another tool but, most importantly providing education and training on nutritional and lifestyle care.
attend hospice multidisciplinary community team meetings. Patients with complex cancer pain syndromes are discussed and proactive joint reviews and procedures arranged where appropriate. Joint consultation with the chronic pain consultant and palliative care team is emphasised to ensure that all options are explored pre-procedure and follow-up is safe post-procedure. It is anticipated that case reviews presented back to the clinical teams will encourage referrals and contribute to ongoing education. In addition, over the first year of the service, the systems to support hospice-based spinal infusion services for intractable cancer pain will be established.

Evaluation A service evaluation will assess numbers of patients identified for discussion, assessment and intervention; clinical team confidence and knowledge; and case note review of perceived patient benefits.

P-119 A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY EXPLORING SUBCUTANEOUS LEVETIRACETAM USE AND PRACTICE WITHIN THE WEST MIDLANDS
Matthew Dore, Sharon Twigger, Kate Holhead, Clare Murlock. NHS, Compton Hospice; WM CARES (West Midlands Collaborative Acting in Research in End-of-Life and Supportive Care)

Background Levetiracetam is increasingly used subcutaneously to control seizure activity in selected palliative patients, whereby seizure control is paramount without the same perceived sedative effect of subcutaneous benzodiazepines. Despite this becoming a well recognised approach the literature and quality evidence to support this remains sparse.

Aim To perform a retrospective audit exploring subcutaneous Levetiracetam use and practice over the past year across the West Midlands, comparing it to guidance in PCF5.

Method An electronic survey sent to all palliative care units and hospital teams across the West Midlands generated information from 31 cases where subcutaneous Levetiracetam had been used. Information gathered included seizure aetiology and type, antiepileptic history, delivery of Levetiracetam, side effects and effectiveness.

Results Seizure aetiology was heterogeneous; 50% caused by space-occupying lesions. 42% of patients had seizures in the week prior to commencement and 58% of seizures were described as tonic-clonic. Nearly all (93%) had anti-epileptics prescribed prior to commencement. The majority of Levetiracetam was delivered via a continuous subcutaneous infusion (92%), the remaining given by bolus subcutaneous regimen. The mean dose on commencement was 1268 mg (range 230 mg-3000 mg) and 12% of infusions were titrated over time due to seizure activity. Levetiracetam was successfully mixed with morphine, midazolam, metoloxapine and dexmedetomidine with no issues reported. In 69% cases concurrent midazolam administration was used, although the rationale varied and was not solely seizure related. 81% reported no side effects attributable to Levetiracetam, 16% reported a local site skin reaction. No further seizures were documented in 70% whilst on subcutaneous Levetiracetam and 62% of subcutaneous Levetiracetam regimens continued till death.

Conclusion This study outlines current varied practice in the West Midlands demonstrating the targeted patient group and practical issues in using subcutaneous Levetiracetam. Collating this information adds to the evidence base and will allow for composition of informed local guidelines.