NURSING CARE INITIATIVE TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALIZED CARE PLANS FOR THE DYING PATIENT

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Background The priorities of the dying patient should be a priority of the healthcare team caring for them. To facilitate this, effective and open communication is key. The aim of this initiative was to focus on patients’ End of Life wishes and enhance care for patients and those important to them.

Methods CQC reports highlighted initiatives used in palliative care settings. Discussions with colleagues brought out recurrent themes – namely privacy and practical support for family members. Relevant publications were also discussed.

Results The use of an End of Life symbol is prevalent in other hospitals, displayed once a patient has died. On this unit due to factors such as withdrawal of treatment, patient deaths can be expected, therefore, the use of a symbol during this period to alert the multidisciplinary team (MDT) – including of course domestic staff – minimize unnecessary interruptions and enhance the patients’ overall care was implemented. Policy, guidelines and consent forms including of course domestic staff were developed and agreed upon with the help of the wider MDT. Teaching for all staff commenced, copyright obtained

Conclusions The over-riding comment from the patient, their families and friends when consenting for use of the symbol was ‘anything as long as it means peace and quiet’. The worry that the symbol would stop people entering was unfounded. It enhanced the essential care and enabled the patients’ individual preferences to be carried out. Feedback obtained through conversations with relatives and questionnaires completed by staff has been overwhelmingly positive.

PARAMEDICS’ UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETATION OF ADVANCE CARE PLANNING: A PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE-BASED STUDY

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Background Paramedics are often the first healthcare professionals to respond to changes in a patient’s condition. However, there has been no previous studies into paramedics’ understanding of legislation relating to advance care planning (ACP), or how they interpret ACP documents. The aim of this pilot study was to find out what knowledge paramedics had about ACP legislation, and how uniformly they interpreted ACP documents.

Methods We invited paramedics to complete a questionnaire about ACP. There were four true-or-false questions about the legal aspects of ACP. The questionnaire also included a hypothetical scenario and simulated Do Not Attempt Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation form related to the scenario. The paramedics were asked whether they would, or would not, start CPR in that scenario.

Results Fifteen paramedics completed the questionnaire. Five reported that they had previously been taught about legal aspects of advance care planning. The correct answers to the true false questions varied between 67% and 87%. Six paramedics completed the scenario question. Five indicated that they would not start CPR. One paramedic indicated that they would start CPR.

Conclusions This pilot study indicates that up to third of paramedics might misunderstand some of the legal aspects relating to ACP. It also indicates a lack of uniformity in how paramedics interpret ACP documents. This study should raise awareness that ACP documents might not always be interpreted as intended. We will use these findings to explore the interpretation of ACP documents in a larger cohort.

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSES’ MOUTH: PERCEIVED FACTORS FOR PROMOTING PALLIATIVE AND END OF LIFE CARE; PERSPECTIVE OF NURSES, PATIENTS AND FAMILY CARERS

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Background Evidence-based approach to the care at the end of life will decrease the danger placed on traditional and familiar policies in hospitals of Sub-Saharan Africa. Palliative care has different characteristics within Africa, there are diverse attitudes to palliative and end of life care informed by multiple meanings and traditions. Although there is insufficient information documented on palliative and end of life care provision in Nigeria and other Sub-Saharan African countries, and there is only weak evidence upon which to build policy...