



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Submitting author: Ms L S LEUNG

Post title: Advanced Practice Nurse, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, KCC

End-of-Life Care Program for Elderly Home Patients - Team work and Volunteer engagement

*LEUNG LS(1), Tsoi LF Amy (1), NG LY(1), LAI YS Wandi(1), TAM KF Stanley(1),
CHAN SF RYAN(2), LIU YW EVA(3)*

1Department of MED, Queen Elizabeth Hospital 2Patient Resouce Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital 3Central Nursing Division, Queen Elizabeth Hospital

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Introduction

Elderly Home patient comprises a significant portion in public healthcare system, which accounts for a quarter of QEH medical admission. Amongst all deceased medical patients in 2007, 37% were admitted from Elderly Homes, with 95.7% residents suffered from chronic illness (Chan and Pang, 2007). Since their life expectancies are limited, it is worth to promote end-of-life care on these frail patients so as to enhance their life quality when the underlying disease can no longer be cured. Psychosocial care is a core element in end-of-life care on these patients. As suggested by previous research (Chan and Chow, 2006), volunteerism can form an integral and enriching part of hospice palliative care. Volunteers have more flexibility to provide daily care and psychosocial support to patients and their significant others through regular visits after intensive and well-structured trainings. Psychosocial support through volunteer participation can therefore enhance their quality of life.

Objectives

1. Change the concept of Elderly Home staff on end-of-life care. 2. Provide clients the option of choice. 3. Enhance the quality of dying with dignity and comfort. 4. Involve volunteers as partners.

Methodology

1. Initiate the advance care planning by specialty nurses for identified patients (those with end-stage dementia, terminal malignancy & frailty) with family members, and document the care plan to facilitate caring decision in subsequent admissions and to avoid unnecessary resuscitation or investigation in futile cases. 2. Conduct regular visits to provide physical symptom assessment / control & psychosocial support according to patients' clinical condition. 3. Educate and liaise with Elderly Home staff to consolidate their concept on end-of-life care and to reduce unnecessary admission. 4. Provide bereavement care to significant others of terminal-ill patients. 5. Train up volunteers the concepts and technique of visiting terminal-ill patients, and schedule monthly reviews for case sharing and follow-up.

Result

1. End-of-Life Care Programme for Terminal-ill Elderly Home Patients (Aug 10 - Aug 13): - 256 Elderly Home residents have been recruited. - Amongst those who have passed away, 97.5% of them have their advance care plan (avoid futile resuscitation) being followed to provide quality care with respect to their own choice. - 3400 on-site visits were conducted to these group of patients. 2. End-of-Life Volunteer Programme (Nov 12 – Nov 13): - 13 trained volunteers provided the end-of-life service for 1 year. - 7 residents from 4 elderly homes and their family members have been served by volunteers and professional team to maintain continuity of quality care. - Feedbacks from volunteers and Elderly Home staff were reviewed by questionnaires. All retrieved feedback agreed that the programme was effective in managing service needs; enhancing quality of care of elderly home residents; and enhancing their knowledge in managing terminal-ill patients.