



## Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

**Convention ID:** 477

**Submitting author:** Ms Chung Yee CHUK

**Post title:** Advanced Practice Nurse, North District Hospital, NTEC

### **Enhance respect and dignity of the mortuary service provision**

*Chuk CY (1) (2), Kwan C WM (2) (3), Lo R SK (1) (2) (3) (4)*

*(1) Hospice Center, North District Hospital, (2) NTEC Palliative Care Service, (3) Bradbury Hospice, (4) Geriatric and Palliative medicine*

#### **Keywords:**

Mortuary staff

Grieving emotions

death

dignified care

Focus group

Training and support

#### **Introduction**

When a death occurs in hospital, it is not just the matter of clinical staff, but also mortuary staff in the handling of deceased body from ward to mortuary and claimed by family members. Mortuary staff plays an important role in the whole experience around death for the bereaved family. They are important member of the hospital team. Training and support should be provided for them in order to extend respectful and dignified care to the grieving families. This project is designed to attend to the needs of this group of easily forgotten people.

#### **Objectives**

1. Elicit the problems and difficulties encountered by mortuary staff in facing death
2. Raise the awareness of staff regarding grief and dignity around death
3. Enhance the communication skill of staff in handling the grieving emotions of relatives
4. Promote support to mortuary staffs
5. Explore further improvement measures

#### **Methodology**

Mortuary staff of acute hospitals was invited to a training session and a focus group discussion via the heads of department. The training session was an one-hour interactive talk on 'Grief emotion of bereaved family and respectful care'. Afterwards, there was a 20 minutes site visit to the mortuary leading by the front line staff. Finally, there was a 45 min focus group discussion. The talk and the focus group were led by Palliative Care team and purposively interactive in nature. Line supervisors and frontline mortuary staff (OPA) were invited to join. Staff was asked to complete a feedback survey at the end of the session. An evaluative visit was performed to NDH mortuary 2 months later.

#### **Result**

Two identical sessions were conducted at NDH and PWH respectively on 25/4/14 and 15/8/14. There were 2 pathologists, 16 mortuary staff from 3 acute hospitals (NDH,

ANHN & PWH) attended. 100% satisfaction of the training session was yielded. Some operational and emotional aspects of issues were elicited in the talk and the focus groups, such as increased communication channel with management team and Food Environmental Hygiene Department, strengthened problem solving skills by mutual sharing, put eye catching signage to reinforce staff to prevent dead body from being seen by the public. Guideline of viewing body and transfer body to mortuary was available. Staff concerns and support needs were reflected to the supervisors / in charge to follow.