



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Enhanced Nutrition Care for Patients with Palliative Care

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Introduction

The focus of palliative care is to enhance patients' quality of life (QOL) and to provide relief from pain and other distressing symptoms. A structured and unique nutrition care strategy was necessary for patients with Palliative Care.

Objectives

Interdisciplinary collaboration of doctors, dietitians, and nurses, develop a nutrition care guideline for patients in palliative care unit (inpatients) of Bradbury Hospice.

The program aims to enhance patients' sense of well-being, relieve nutrition-related symptoms and optimize their eating experience in order to improve their quality of life.

Methodology

Patient at palliative to terminal phase:

1. Assessed nutrition related problems and food preference on admission.
2. Reviewed medications and treat reversible symptoms, i.e. nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, mouth sore, etc.
3. Promoted food enjoyment:
 - Liberalized diet restriction if condition allows.
 - Served small portions of food and encourage patients to eat little and often.
 - Advised family to bring patients' favorite foods.
 - Provided a variety of snacks/foods to meet patient's special need. (i.e. sesame paste dessert, cake, juice, coffee, milk tea, ginger tea, Chinese soup, condiments, etc.)
 - Used fortified foods or nutritional supplements prescribed by dietitian as tolerated/preferred by patients.
 - Made mealtime environment conducive to eating.
 - Patients might eat outside of the wards or eat with friends/relatives where possible.
4. Provided standard oral nutritional supplement to promote nutrition intake.
5. Further assessment and intervention by dietitian when nutrition related problem

persisted.

6. Provided psychological and emotional support to patient and family on nutrition-related distress.

7. Open and honest discussion of the benefits and burdens of nutrition support to facilitate decisions that were in the patient's best interest.

Result

Pre (15) and post (16) program patient satisfaction surveys were collected from palliative care unit (inpatients) of Bradbury Hospice. The results showed that the satisfaction rate increased significantly after implementation of the guideline in 4Q 2016.

The program outcomes indicated that patients were appreciative of 1) the special foods provided to meet their need, 2) nutritional information provided, and 3) psychological and emotional support on nutrition-related distress.

The positive results suggested that the program would improve the QOL of patients.