Use of the Palliative Performance Scale Version 2 (PPSv2) in Obtaining Palliative Care Consults
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Objectives

• At the end of this presentation the learner will be able
  – Identify patients appropriate for palliative care by utilizing the Palliative Performance Scale version 2 (PPSv2)
  – Identify how to use the PPSv2 in requesting palliative care consults from the physician

Problem

Older adults with chronic illness may not be receiving the benefits of palliative care
Definition of Palliative Care

- Specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses
- Goals:
  - Relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress of a serious illness—whatever the diagnosis
  - Improve quality of life for both the patient and the family
- Team of doctors, nurses, and other specialists
  - Work together with a patient’s other doctors to provide an extra layer of support
- Appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatment

Why is Palliative Care Necessary?

National Data on the Experience of Advanced Illness in 5 Tertiary Care Teaching Hospitals:

- 9000 patients with life-threatening illness, 50% died within 6 months of entry
- Less than 50% of physicians knew when patients preferred to avoid CPR
- 79% of patients who died with a DNR order, 46% of those orders were written within 2 days of death
- Half had moderate-severe pain in last 3 days of life
- 38% of those who died spent >10 days in ICU, in coma, or on a ventilator.

What Patients with Chronic Illness Want

- Pain and symptom control
- Avoid inappropriate prolongation of the dying process
- Achieve a sense of control
- Relieve burdens on family
- Strengthen relationships with loved ones
Barriers to Palliative Care

- Prognostication
  - Physician clinical prediction of survival can be overly optimistic
  - Physicians overestimate survival by a factor of five

Glare et al, 2003
Chow et al, 2001
Christakis, Lamont, Parke, and Smith, 2000

Barrier: Prognosis in Chronic Illness

Lorenz et al., 2008
Lunney, Lynn, Foley, Lipson, & Guralnik, 2003

What Tools Exist to Help in Prognostication?
Palliative Performance Scale version 2 (PPSv2)

- Assessment tool developed by Victoria Hospice in British Columbia
- Modification of Karnofsky Performance Scale
  - Includes ambulation ability, oral intake, and patient consciousness level
- Score patient from 0-100% in 10% increments
  - Ambulation
  - Activity Level
  - Self-care
  - Intake
  - Conscious level

(Anderson, Downing, Hill, Casorso, and Lerch, 1996)

Palliative Performance Scale version 2 (PPSv2)

• Evidence based
  - Validity tested in various settings including acute care
  - Each 10% increment score of the PPSv2 showed statistically significant differences in survival rate
• Easy to use
• Can be used as evidence for needing palliative care

(Victoria Hospice, 2013)

Palliative Performance Scale version 2 (PPSv2)
Mrs. C

Mrs. C is 86 year old female
- PMH of PVD, CAD, atrial fibrillation, and chronic kidney disease
- Mrs. C has been unable to get out of bed for past 6 months
- Complete bath, turn q2 hours
- NPO with tube feeding per G-tube
- She has occasional episode of confusion

Palliative Performance Scale version 2 (PPSv2)

Research Purpose
- Does educating nurses on the PPSv2 tool increase their comfort level in identifying patients appropriate for palliative care?
- Does educating nurses on the PPSv2 tool increase their comfort level in asking physicians for palliative care consults?
Study Design

- Pre and Post test with educational intervention
- Pre and post test sent out via Survey Monkey
  - Included participant identifier
- Educational intervention at unit staff meeting
- Completed on a 35 bed acute care medical unit within a Midwest Tertiary Hospital
- Nursing experience level 0-3 years

Pre-test/Post Test

- Comfort questions
- Rate 1-5 on Likert scale
- Developed and validated using content experts
- How comfortable are you in…
  - identifying which patients are end of life?
  - identifying which patients have chronic illness with limited treatment options?
  - identifying which patients have decreased functional ability?
  - assessing that a patient needs a palliative care consult?
  - requesting a palliative care consult from the physician?

Pre-test/Post Test

- Knowledge questions
- Answers: true, false, or “I don’t know”
- Adapted from the Palliative Care Quiz for Nursing (PCQN)
  - Palliative care is appropriate only in situations where there is evidence of a downhill trajectory of deterioration (answer: false)
  - Palliative care should only be provided for patients who have no curative treatments available (answer: false)
  - The philosophy of palliative care is compatible with that of aggressive treatment (answer: true)

Ross, McDonald, & McGuiness, 1996
Educational Intervention

- 30 minutes
- Philosophy of palliative care
- Services provided
- PPSv2 - demonstrate how to use
  - 50% or lower score indicative of needing palliative care
- Case studies
- How to use the PPSv2 in discussions with physicians

Post Education Mentoring

- Conducted by unit Nurse Clinician and researcher
- Identified patients through discharge rounds and unit rounds
- Mentored nurses on the PPSv2 and discussion with physicians
- Utilized charge nurses as resource
- Example during rounds

Results

- 30 nurses sent survey
- 23 pre-survey
- 16 post-survey
- 12 matched pairs
Results: Comfort questions

- Overall improvement in comfort of nurses
  - $p$-value = 0.040

- How comfortable are you in assessing that a patient needs a palliative care consult?
  - Pre-survey: 58.4% somewhat comfortable (4)
  - Post-survey: 91.9% somewhat or very comfortable (4 or 5)
  - $p$-value = 0.005

Results: Comfort questions

- How comfortable are you in requesting palliative care consult from the physician?
  - Not a significant increase in comfort
  - $p$-value = 0.505

Results: Knowledge questions

- Overall improvement in knowledge of nurses
  - $p$-value = 0.027

- The philosophy of palliative care is compatible with that of aggressive treatment (answer: true)
  - Pre-survey: 78.3% wrong answer or did not know
  - Match pairs: 91.7% pre to 75% post wrong answer or did not know
Research Purpose

- Does educating nurses on the PPSv2 tool increase their comfort level in identifying patients appropriate for palliative care?

Yes!

Research Purpose

- Does educating nurses on the PPSv2 tool increase their comfort level in asking physicians for palliative care consults?

Not really

Conclusions

- Knowledge deficit of nurses related to palliative care and aggressive treatment – Barrier to palliative care referral
- Education and PPSv2 can help nurses identify patients in need of palliative care
- Barriers still exist in approaching physicians
Limitations

- Remove ambiguity of survey questions
- Small sample
- Limited demographics
- Limited post intervention mentoring period

Future Research

- Repeat study
  - Larger sample
  - Remove limitations of survey
  - Varied demographics
  - More involvement in mentoring period
- More education on palliative care
- Explore other barriers to palliative care
- Teach nurses how to advocate for patient using PPSv2/discussion with physicians

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References


