Improving Hospital Mortality, Readmissions, and Patient Satisfaction through Palliative Care

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Palliative Care Education, LLC
Learning Objectives

➔ List four key steps of a palliative care systems-change initiative in a community hospital.

➔ Describe three elements of clinician education necessary to teach *Goals of Care* conversations.

➔ Describe potential benefits from an education and systems change initiative focused around goals of care.
Specialist Palliative Care: Outcomes

- Reduced time to symptom relief
- Improved patient and family satisfaction
- Earlier hospice referral
- Reduced readmissions/inpt. mortality
- Reduced ICU days
- Reduced hospital $ loss
But, there is still work to be done…
Problems

➔ Poor Advance Care Planning
  ➔ “Frequent flyer” ED visits and hospital admissions
  ➔ ICU terminal admissions/Avoidable inpt. deaths
➔ Too much: “its not time for palliative care”
➔ Not enough specialists
➔ Generalists abdicating their role
Meeting the Need ...
Truisms

✓ The real work of the future is to improve care decisions long before the “terminal” admission.
✓ There will never be enough palliative care specialists.
✓ Improving the work of generalist clinicians is essential to a broad based movement to improve patient-centered care.
Who are generalists?

➔ Primary Care, Oncologists, Hospitalists, Pulm/CC, Nephrology, Neurology etc.
➔ Ward/ICU/ED/Clinic nurses
➔ Unit social workers/DC planners
➔ Hospital chaplains
Case Study

➔ Aurora Healthcare
  – Largest health system in Wisconsin/Northern Illinois
  – 15 hospitals
  – 6 hospitals w/ palliative care clinicians/programs

➔ Aurora West Allis Medical Center (AWAMC)
  – Second largest system hospital - 350 beds
  – Specialty Palliative Care since 2010
Impetus

➔ Palliative Care staff came to Chief Medical Officer
  – Failure to Plan
  – Preventable Suffering
  – Poor Advance Care Planning

Resulting in ….
Mortality Review: 50 charts

✓ No screening of patients at high risk for unmet palliative needs
✓ Too many ICU deaths
✓ Comfort care orders written < 24 hours from death
✓ Goals of care discussions not completed early in the stay
✓ Advance directives completion poor
✓ DNR orders not always followed
✓ System failures
What was Broken?

- Poor communication skills
- Lack of accountability

Failure to Plan

Suffering

LOS/ICU deaths/Inpt. Mortality
CMO and CQO agreed: A New System was Needed!
Solution

- Improve communication skills
- Hold staff accountable
- Timely Planning

Suffering
- LOS/ICU deaths/Inpt. Mortality
Current System
Referral Based Palliative Care

Clinician Referral

Clinic
Consult Service
Inpatient Unit
Home-care
The Goal: Patient Centered Approach

All patients assessed

Palliative Care needs met by generalists

Specialist services as needed
Project Team

➔ Tim Jessick - Palliative Medicine physician
➔ Kay Fischer - Palliative Medicine APRN
➔ Andy McDonagh - CMO
➔ Suzie Feuling - Director of Quality
➔ Rick Keller - President AWAMC
➔ Medical Executive Committee
➔ David Weissman - Consultant
Generalist Focus

➔ Hospitalists
➔ Emergency Room Physicians
➔ Others
  – Oncology
  – Cardiology
  – General Surgery
  – Case managers
Guiding Principle

Education + System Changes → Improved Outcomes
The Approach

➔ Senior leadership engagement
  – Medical Executive Committee

➔ Data driven
  – Case review
  – Frequent, consistent feedback
  – Ongoing assessment of outcomes, risk and harm

➔ Literature based best practices
  – Focus on variation and effect on the patient
Generalist Education

- Ethics
- Communication Skills
- Psycho-Social-Spiritual Family Care
- Community Resources/Hospice
- Pain and Symptom Management
What to teach?

Teaching focused on communication skills for generalists:

- Primary focus on the *Goals of Care Conversation (GOCC)*
- **Supporting information**
- Goal: not perfection
  - Awareness of personal attitudes
  - Awareness of personal deficiencies
  - Awareness of an organized step-wise approach
Goals of Care

- Prognosis
- Basic Communication Skills
- Giving Bad News
- Conflict

Basic Communication Skills

Counseling Skills
## Agenda/4.5 hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Giving Bad News</th>
<th>Role Play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prognostication: cancer and non-cancer factors</td>
<td>Readings/Group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making Capacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Directives: clinical responsibilities/protections</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Informed consent: emergency exception</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Goal Setting meeting-Part 1</strong></td>
<td>Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Goal Setting meeting-Part 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict management</strong></td>
<td>Role Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DNR/CPR</strong></td>
<td>Role Play</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Training Principles

➔ Small group learning environment (< 20)
➔ Time to discuss personal attitudes that impede communication w/ cognitive re-framing
➔ Time to practice different words using role playing
  – Focus on microskills
➔ Didactic information:
  – ethics and legal issues, advance directives, prognostication, hospital policies.
Logistics

➔ Getting Buy-In
  – Trained the Medical Executive Committee
    • Internists, Surgeons, ED, Cardiology, Ortho

➔ Roll-Out
  – >70 hospitalists, ED physicians, specialists
  – Case managers, CNS’s,
  – CNO, CMO, Director of Quality
Logistics

➔ First, Medical Executive Committee members volunteered for the course; then ...

➔ CMO, CNO and hospitalist Medical Director required the hospitalists, case managers and nurse leaders to take the course

➔ Funding split between hospital administration and the medical staff

➔ CME- 20 Performance Improvement credits
Participant Comments

➔ “Every clinician should go through this.”

➔ “This is the first time I’ve ever been taught a structured step-by-step approach.”

➔ “It takes time to practice different words and find what works.”

➔ “I hate role play, but I have to admit, it is the only way to learn how to do this better.”
Physician Follow-Up

➔ Two, one hour mentoring sessions
  – Observed goals of care discussions

➔ Assistance in documentation
  – Implemented goals of care template

➔ Chart review
  – Looked for presence of and quality of the goals of care notes
Additional Education

• Pain 101 classes provided to house-staff
  – Two, 1 hour classes

• Code status 101 course provided to house-staff
  – 30 minute course

• Social Work advance care planning classes
  – *Respecting Choices™* model taught to all social workers as a baseline
Guiding Principle

Education + System Changes → Improved Outcomes
Embedding the GOCC into Practice

- Standard of Care
- Who/When GOCC
- Documentation/EMR
- Quality Monitoring
Systems Changes

➔ Education
  – Required Hospitalist Training: GOCC

➔ Standards and Documentation
  – All patients (hospitalist service) have goals of care discussions-requirement
    • Required documentation of GOCC
    • New EMR Template for GOCC
Systems Changes

➔ Quality Improvement
  – Quality Department reviews charts monthly for completion of GOC discussions and advance directive completion
  – Weekly Mortality Review Committee: missed opportunities
  – Peer review for outliers

➔ Care Coordination
  – DNR bracelet project
  – Coordination with two Skilled Nursing Homes
  – Coordination with the ED
Goals of Care Template

1. *Does the patient have an AD?*

2. *Is the patient decisional?*

3. *What are the Goals of Care?*

4. *What is the patient’s code status and rationale?*
Goals of Care
Documentation Example

➔ **Advance directives:**
  – HCPOA in EMR; Daughter is POA. DNR/DNI; Rationale: Poor prognosis, family preference

➔ **Decisionality:**
  – Patient Is not decisional

➔ **Goals of Care:**
  – 85 y/o with DM, dementia and weight loss, with new infection, possibly sepsis; patient very likely to die within 12 months.
  – POA wants to try antibiotics and fluids to reverse infection. Re-evaluate progress and goals with family q24 hours.
Mortality Review Committee

**Mission:** Capture quality data, implement new standards, and improve care by identification of system failures.

➔ CMO, Director of Quality, Risk Manager, Hospitalist, Palliative Medicine Physician, Director of Case Management, Pharmacist, Quality data personnel

➔ Weekly evaluation of all deaths

➔ Evaluation of Failure to Plan
# Mortality Review Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At the time of admission, was death within 6 months a likely outcome?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the time of admission, was death likely during this admission?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were there missed opportunities to prevent this inpatient death?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of the following may have helped prevent this inpatient death?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Better communication to establish patient centered goals—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Greater emphasis in resolving conflicts over care goals—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Better attention to preventable complications: e.g. falls, infections,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medications, bed sores, blood clots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the lack of an advance care planning document a contributing factor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to this inpatient death?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the patient was admitted to an ICU, was ICU admission an appropriate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>site of care relative the patients condition and prognosis? In other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words, could ICU care realistically be expected to meet the patient-defined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goals of care?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should this case go to Peer Review?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project Results

January 2014 to June 2015
Analysis
# Outcomes: 2013-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Metrics</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Inpatient Deaths</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># and % of ICU deaths</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOS Inpatient deaths</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNF to Hospital Readmissions</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code 4 Calls</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission within 30 days of terminal admission</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED visits within 30 days of terminal admission</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospice Referrals</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCAHPS Scores</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation of GOC discussion</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Completed Adv. Directives</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort care orders within 24 hrs of admission</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inpatient Deaths

Deaths/Admissions

2014

2015
Advance Directive in Chart

Focus Base Q3 2014 Q4 2014 Q1 2015 Q2 2015

FB Q4 Q5 Q6 Q3

No Yes

77%

50%
LOS: Inpatient Deaths

[Graph showing LOS trends over different quarters and years, with specific values and color codes indicating different LOS ranges.]
ED to Hospice Direct Discharges

Jan-Jun 2014 | Jul-Dec 2014 | Jan-Jun 2015
---|---|---
| | | EDUCATION
More Data

- Readmissions down 7%
- Inpatient mortality (34% reduction in two years)
- Patient satisfaction re: clinician communication
- Hospice referrals (14% increase in two years)
- HCAHPS communication scores for course participants (11% increase)
Positive Data Led to …

RECOMMENDATIONS to Med Exec Committee

→ Care process: screen all hospitalized patients for unmet ACP / Palliative care needs

→ Standard practice: GOALS of CARE Discussion and Documentation
  – Floor patient – 24 hr. or by the first progress note.
  – ICU patient – at the time of admission

→ Standard practice: CODE Status discussion and documentation – at the time of admission

→ Streamline process: rapid escalation of cases to Ethics committee for resolution of care conflicts / unclear goals of care
Future Goals

➔ Screening all patients admitted for unmet needs (not just hospitalist service)
➔ Follow-up training (Reinforcement) for the hospitalists
➔ Three more Aurora hospitals adopting training.
Take Home Messages

➔ You need top down support
  – CMO and CQO are critical
➔ Be patient, system change takes time and dogged persistence
➔ Be adaptable, but hold on to key fundamentals
IMPROVING GENERALIST PALLIATIVE CARE
FOR HOSPITALIZED SERIOUSLY ILL PATIENTS

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATORS
AND OTHER STAFF CHARGED WITH REDUCING INPATIENT MORTALITY,
READMISSION REDUCTION, AND IMPROVING PATIENT SATISFACTION.

Provided by
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