

ATI: Video Case Study Palliative and Hospice Care

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How can the nurse ensure that a client receiving palliative/hospice care is kept comfortable? What are some ways that the nurse could provide for the psychosocial and spiritual comfort of the client?

Ensuring that the client receiving palliative/hospice care is comfortable is one of the most important aspects of palliative/hospice care, because the goal of this therapy is increasing client comfort and quality of life. The nurse can ensure that the client is kept comfortable with interventions including following pain medication schedules, administering oxygen, preventing and/or treatment new manifestations of the client's illness, providing a calming presence, and providing outlets for the client's and/or family's spirituality. Specifically, the nurse can provide psychosocial comfort by listening and conversing with the client if they are verbal, or listening and conversing with the family if the client is non-verbal. The nurse can provide spiritual comfort by providing opportunities for the client and/or family to share religious practices or beliefs.

How can the nurse provide support for the family/loved ones of the dying client?

Providing support for the individuals close to a dying client is an important role that the hospice nurse will play. In general, the nurse can provide support to loved ones by simply being present in the clients care. The nurse can do things such as listen to family member concerns, provide answers, provide rationales for treatments, and provide them the "shoulder to cry on" when they need it. All of the above examples and many more are small things that the nurse can do to ease the concerns of the client's loved ones.

What feelings occurred when interacting with a person with a life-limiting illness?

When working and interacting with a person with a life-limiting illness, this student nurse felt various feelings. One feeling that occurred was empathy, specifically empathy for the patient. When a patient has a life-limiting illness, it is difficult to not think of yourself in their shoes. Another feeling that occurred was pride. This student nurse was proud that he was able to provide personalized care for a client that may have been nearing the end of life.

Were the feelings or emotions adequately handled?

Yes, the feelings and emotions were adequately handled. This student nurse did not let their emotions interfere with care, and did not let negative emotions show to the patient. Overall, the interaction went very well and quality care was delivered.

Was there adequate communication with the ill person?

This student nurse ensured that communication was open and continuous with the individual with the life-limiting illness. Nurse-patient communication is at the core of providing competent care, and communicating with a chronically ill patient is no different. This student nurse interacted and conversed with the individual like he would with any other patient, and took extra time for the patient to voice any thoughts or concerns.

How did the person with the life-limiting illness feel during their interactions?

The individual with the life-limiting illness felt acknowledged during this interaction. The individual was grateful to be receiving personalized one-on-one care from a student, and was happy to be helping the student along their educational journey. At the end of the interaction, the individual wished the student good luck and thanked them for their help.

Could the interactions have been improved in any way? How?

One way this interaction could have been improved would have been with more experience by the student nurse. This was one of the first times this student nurse had been in that situation, and while they did the best they could, more experience would have likely made the situation more comfortable. Another way this interaction could have been improved is with more time. Even though the student nurse spent adequate time with the individual, providing more time would have provided a longer outlet for the patient to discuss any feelings with the student nurse.