

Palliative and Hospice Care Reflection

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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?

When healthcare workers have a client to whom they are giving care, they want to make sure the client is comfortable as possible, and that the client is fulfilling their needs as they transition. The nurse can set a relaxing mood. Some clients prefer the room to be quiet and with fewer people around. Involving the dying person because they can hear still, it is good to let the client know what is happening every step of the way. Playing soothing music at a low volume can help relax and ease some of their pain. The most important thing a nurse can do is to be present, actively present, and show up for the client in every way to provide the love and care they need, which will help the client's transition be peaceful. Over making sure the client's end-of-life wishes are being met. The nurse could provide spiritual and psychosocial comfort by advocating for the client/family and contacting a spiritual support person. Some clients find comfort in having a spiritual support person on their team. The nurse should ensure the client receives both pharmacological and non-pharmacological comfort measures. Oxygen therapy and positioning help to alleviate dyspnea and is a standard of comfort care.

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

Giving support to a dying client's family is essential. There are many ways of supporting the family/loved ones, including by allowing the family to express their concerns. Offering moral support can be beneficial to the family so they do not feel like they are alone. Taking the time and not rushing the family/loved ones to visit with the client after they have passed will help allow the family to know the student nurse's care. Encouraging the family and friends to say their goodbyes to the client can also help

the nurse be supportive. Even though we know as people that death is a thing that will occur to everyone in life, it is never easy to accept death when the time comes.

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

Based on personal experiences, interacting with a person with a life-limiting illness made the student nurse uneasy. There was this overwhelming feeling, and it was because the student nurse had never seen someone transition or experienced what it felt like to take care of someone who was in their last days. Working in the nursing home, the student nurse gets used to caring for clients who are in hospice or who need palliative care. It becomes easier to care for clients on hospice, but seeing the family grieve is still very hard. The feelings that have developed now are that the client will not be in pain anymore. There is a feeling of relief because, most of the time, the client is already in that acceptance stage, but sadness because, as a CNA taking care of them for so long can be like losing family.

The student nurse saw the family's reaction, and being there for them when grieving was most important. Depending on which family member, there are all different kinds of emotions. Some are prepared and were aware that someday this would happen. Then some family members have not accepted that their loved one has passed on, so there are still a lot of hurt feelings. It is good to be a voice for the family because sometimes, when they are still in shock or pain, they do not know what to do. Feeling lost in a situation where the loved one will no longer be present with the family is hard to take in, no matter how much the family prepares for the situation.

Were the feelings or emotions adequately handled?

Taking care of someone who is actively dying is never easy, so for the betterment of the client, keeping emotions intact was essential in the healthcare worker's case. Stepping in and taking care of the family, making sure they needed anything, and making specific calls to help the situation to be easier

gives them a moment to grieve appropriately and give them a moment to think clearly in a situation they may not be able to do so. The experience is different in a nursing home from a hospital setting, but there are still times when spiritual supporters are welcome to come in and help the client/family through their grief. In the video, when the client seemed to pass on, healthcare professionals were put in place to help the family get through their grief. In this situation, most of the time, the client has accepted that they will not be here much longer, and they honestly want to be done going through life with pain or feeling of discomfort; that has been the experience of the nursing student.

Was there adequate communication with the ill person?

From personal experience communicating with a person in hospice/palliative care, letting them know every step of the way what was happening and voicing everything in front of them allows the client to feel like they are still included in their care. If the client can still talk, they can voice their feelings about what they do and do not like or what they want and do not want. In a situation where the client cannot talk, it is good to communicate because the client still can hear, and that helps the client know the student nurse is there for them and not just to do the job. Even if they cannot communicate, some non-verbal cues may be given if that is all they can do. Communication is a line that should always be kept open in any settling of care that is provided, no matter the circumstance.

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

The client felt at ease. The client voiced to the student nurse their wants and needs to help the client be comfortable. The client felt heard and that they were included in their care. The client in this situation wanted to listen to music to help them relax but soothing music. Overall, the student nurse provided the client's desired care, so the client was pleased. The pain was an issue because of some discomfort, so changing positions every hour or two helped the client not to have skin breakdown but also

not get stuck in certain positions for too long, which the client liked. A client with a life-limiting illness should feel comfort in their last moment on earth rather than in pain.

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

The student nurse thinks there is always room for improvement, so as long as the client has a great team to see the wishes of the client and the family through, things can always go well. The student nurse thinks that having a positive attitude in front of the client and the family can help the client/family accept the circumstances. Providing quality care and showing that the student nurse is genuinely there for the client and family is most important, so they know they will be cared for. The role of a nurse is not only to provide quality care physically but also mentally.