

Client Comfort and End of Life Care Reflection

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What was learned from this scenario?

This scenario taught me that putting patients first and advocating for them is essential for comfort care. Sometimes, family or friends pressure the client and healthcare team to make confident choices that are only sometimes what the client wants. Talking to the healthcare team regarding the client's care is crucial to making the best decision for their well-being. Also, therapeutic communication is vital in all aspects of nursing, but it is essential during end-of-life care to ensure the client's hope and reassurance.

Identify the biggest takeaways.

a) Explain the factors that influenced this decision.

The biggest takeaways included advocating for the client. Throughout the scenario, there were instances where the nurse answered both the client and the family when she could have just answered the family. Still, I observed how it is essential to include the client in all conversations since they make the final decision unless stated otherwise. As stated above, therapeutic communication was also helpful in the scenario and a huge takeaway from my point of view. Using therapeutic communication is essential in connecting with patients, and it shows the patient that you are there to support, understand, reassure, and complete their wishes during end-of-life care. The factors influencing this decision are observing the conversations in this scenario. It was helpful to watch this being played out.

What are some of the main problems or key issues expressed in the scenario?

Some of the main problems in this scenario included pain medication management; the daughters disagreed with the option of pain medication when it was ultimately the patient's decision. The treatment halt was the patient's idea, and the family did not accept that thoroughly—the plan of care disagreements between the family, such as going on a ventilator.

Comfortability during end-of-life care was hard for this patient because of the environment in which she was observed.

What were some of the challenging decisions the nurse needed to make?

a) Describe the rationale behind these decisions.

The nurse's challenging decision included asking the family difficult questions about the client's care and the family's difference of opinion. Throughout the scenario, the nurse questioned the family's decisions, such as the pain medication situation, when they were not always the client's choice. The nurse was able to respectfully say to the family that the mother needed rest without confirming the source of the noise, which can sometimes be challenging. The nurse was able to confidently ask her nurse manager and the doctor for help with the family, which takes some confidence because the difference of opinion of the family was difficult on the patient, family, and nurse.

What factors influenced the nursing decisions and responses during the scenario?

a) Explain the response.

b) How will a nurse respond if this scenario presents again in the future?

The client's comfort was the most significant factor influencing the nurse's decisions. The nurse's advocacy of the client was also essential in the decision-making. The nurse was able to respond with therapeutic communication, which was always in favor of the client's decisions. The nurse always responded in the client's best interest and assured the family that this was what she wanted, asked an open-ended question to learn more, or asked the client. The nurse shall respond to the family by reiterating that this is what the client wants and that she is doing everything to keep the client comfortable during this time. If the family is not cooperative, the nurse may ask the family to leave for a little while so the patient can get some rest.

Have similar situations been experienced in current clinical rotations?

- a) How did nursing or others respond to the situation? Please explain.**
- b) Describe successful communication strategies used or experienced in the clinical setting.**

I experienced a similar situation last semester. The nurse I was shadowing was adamant that they were there for the client but were happy to answer any other questions. The nurse was also good at informing the client's family and explaining everything well so they could understand. Therapeutic communication is the most essential communication strategy, especially in end-of-life comfort care. It provides the family and client with reassurance and lets them know you are there for them and will advocate for them entirely.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having families discuss treatment options, including end-of-life decisions before a loved one becomes ill or early in a terminal illness.

An advantage of having a family there is comforting you as the nurse, knowing the client is loved and will be looked after at the end of their life. The family is also a good patient advocate alongside the nurse, but ultimately, it is the client's decision. The involvement in the family also gives the patient a "happier" death experience. Families will possibly be able to grieve and receive clarity about their loved ones' deaths if they are involved. One disadvantage of having the family involved is their difficulty accepting that it is the client's overall decision unless stated otherwise. A family might even project their feelings onto the healthcare staff because of their guilt and sadness. There may also be disagreement within the family dynamic that can add stress to the family and client. Not all family members are accepting of the treatment and decisions regarding end-of-life care, so it may be difficult for the nurse to have those difficult conversations with the family.