

Client Comfort and End of Life Care Reflection

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What was learned from this scenario?

In this scenario, I learned about the dynamic between parents and other family members during end-of-life care. This scenario showed this in many ways. The mother had children who had different opinions on what the patient should do. One daughter wanted the mother to keep fighting, while the other wanted to respect their mother's wishes and let her pass peacefully. There was also an aunt that was involved who wanted to involve a chaplain in her mother's end of life care. These examples show that there will be differences in what the family wants for the patient, but at the end of the day, what the patient wants is what is the most important. It is up to nurses to identify the patient's wants and needs and advocate for them.

Identify the biggest takeaways.

a) Explain the factors that influenced this decision.

One of the biggest factors that helped influence the decision was the wishes of the patient. In the scenario, the sisters had differing opinions on what their mother wanted to do. Even though this was the case, what the patient wants takes precedence over the wishes of the rest of the family. I think that the nurse did a great job of listening to what was going on and trying to determine the best course of action for the patient. The nurse got other workers who were better equipped to handle the situation and it seemed that they were taking the right steps to resolve the issue and give the patient what she wanted.

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

The main problem in the scenario was that others were trying to make decisions for the patient. The two daughters thought that they knew what best for their mother. They argued about what the mother wanted in terms of medicine and care. Also, the arguing hindered the

mother from relaxing the way that she wanted to. Their arguing, along with the bickering of the two little children, did not make for a relaxing environment, which was what the patient wanted.

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

a) Describe the rationale behind these decisions.

The nurse had to make a few tough decisions. One of those tough decisions was deciding whether, or not, to give the patient pain medication. This was because both daughters had different opinions about what their mother wanted. One daughter thought it would be best to give her pain medication to help her relax, while the other thought that their mother did not want pain medication because she did not want to miss out on her last moments with her family. Also, I believe that involving the doctor and management was another tough decision. I think that this was a tough decision because involving other members of the care team may lead the family to think that the nurse thinks that they are dysfunctional. This could lead to distrust between the family and the nurse, something that is pivotal to providing good care to patients. I think that she made the right decision to involve the doctor and other members of the care team.

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?

Throughout the scenario, I wanted to figure out what the patient wanted. This is what influenced my decision-making process through this scenario. Because of all the differing opinions, it was important to me to get down to what was important to the patient and what would make her as comfortable as possible. I think that comfort care means doing your best to give the patient whatever they want. I think that I would respond in the same manner that I did if this scenario were to present itself again. I believe that my approach to the scenario was a good one and it prioritized the wants and needs of the client over everyone else in the family.

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 currently work in the emergency room in Danville. There have been plenty times where older adult patients have come in with full code paperwork, but once CPR gets started, the family opts to discontinue. In these situations, I've seen nurses be extremely caring towards these families. It is a tough decision to make to make an older adult patient DNR. Normally, the communication strategies used include taking the family to a separate room and explaining what will happen if the patient remains a full code. Once this conversation takes place, the patient and families are able to make better, more informed decisions. I think it is important to communicate all sides of the coin and help families understand exactly what is going on.

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.

There are many advantages and disadvantages to discussing treatment options before a loved one becomes ill. For advantages, it is always important to be prepared. No one ever knows when they might come into a situation where a loved one has to choose to stay alive or not. Being prepared allows the family to know what to expect if and when these situations arise. For disadvantages, it is possible that the decision of a client changes. It is very possible that a patient who is full code can decide to be a DNR/DNI patient. In some cases, there is no chance for the patient to verbalize the change and CPR gets done on a patient that does not want it. I still believe that it is important to discuss these options early so that families and patients can prepare for the coming times.