

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?

A nurse can ensure that their client receiving palliative/hospice care is kept comfortable by implementing supplemental oxygen and giving pain medications as scheduled. Palliative care is about keeping the patient comfortable. Shortness of breath and pain can both be uncomfortable, so correcting those things is important for the patient's comfort. So, it's important that we keep the patient physically comfortable, but we should also care for them psychosocially and spiritually.

Listening to and following a patient's wishes are some ways that a nurse can provide psychosocial and spiritual comfort. Psychosocial health is as vital to a patient's care as physical health. People often feel better when they know that their healthcare team is going to follow their wishes, as well as being able to talk to them openly. Nurses are often prominent advocates for a patient's psychosocial and spiritual care.

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

A nurse can consider the needs of the family and loved ones of a dying patient and provide support. These people often need comfort, education, and support. All nurses should be more than equipped to comfort, educate, and support the family when a loved one is dying. We always think about the patient and what they need, but sometimes it's the family that we have to help.

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

I have worked on an inpatient Oncology unit for over 3 years, and I love being part of their care, but sometimes the feelings I get are also sad, happy, and calm. As I had said, I feel delighted to be a part of that patient's care, but I also feel sad that they're in so much pain, and I also tend to feel calm when they are resting peacefully, surrounded by family. Some situations are more challenging than others to emotionally and mentally process. There are so many emotions that can be had when interacting with a person with a life-limiting illness.

Were the feelings or emotions adequately handled?

I always try to handle my emotions adequately. My patients often see me with a smile and ready to help them in any way. It would not benefit my patients if I were unable to handle my emotions. Any nurse must be able to hold their composure when dealing with patients at the end of their lives.

Was there adequate communication with the ill person?

I always have great conversations with my patients, regardless of their illness. I think there are a good number of times when patients are more willing to open up to me, maybe because I'm in their room so much more. I find it important that patients feel comfortable enough to talk with me. I'm always able to communicate with my patients.

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

I'd love to believe that all my patients feel good after their interactions with me. I can't always make all my patients happy, but I do try. I love it when I'm able to relate to them and joke with them. I always try to make every interaction a good one,

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

Yes, there are always some interactions I wish could have gone better. There are some people with whom you just vibe better than others. Some interactions could go better if I weren't

trying to do my job. I feel as though I often have to make people upset by constantly bothering them about their vitals, blood sugar, and other things. Overall, I don't take it personally, but it does make me wish that the interaction could have been different.