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 their patients are kept comfortable by assessing how the patient looks. If the patient can speak, the nurse can ask if the patient is having any pain or how their breathing is. If the patient cannot speak, they can look at the patient to see if they are showing any signs of distress. They could be breathing too fast or showing signs on their face if they are having any pain or looking uncomfortable.

Nurses can provide a pastor to come talk to the patient and the family to help with any spiritual guidance. Music can be played in the room, and it allows family and friends to come and visit.

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

Nurses can provide support to their patients' families by ensuring the family is comfortable in the room and making sure they do not do anything. Some facilities offer a cart that could be brought up for the family that has drinks and snacks in case they get hungry. The nurse can also talk to the family to ensure they don't have any questions to concerns with the process or the care that will be provided.

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

When taking care of a patient who has a life-limiting illness, it can be very emotional. It can be difficult to remain without emotions when taking care of the client. From personal experience, I find it very hard to leave the patient when you know what's going to happen. Patients who are suffering from an illness that limits their life can be difficult because you do not

want to overburden the patient by consistently going in there to make sure they are okay, but it is important to still check on them frequently.

Were the feelings or emotions adequately handled?

The emotions that come with taking care of these patients is to make sure to talk about them. Nurses can go through the same grief that the families go through when they have taken care of the patient at some point. Nurses can often talk to the patient and let them know it was great taking care of them, and they wish them the best, or even giving the patient comfort can help the nurse with their own feelings and emotions. Talking with the family could also help if the family is okay with talking about it.

Was there adequate communication with the ill person?

It can be difficult to determine whether communication was adequate with the patient, especially if they are not fully coherent. It is important to ensure the patient knows everything that is happening, along with the family that is with them. If the patient is able to talk, it can be helpful to ask the patient to repeat back what was said to ensure they heard everything okay.

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

Some patients may be hard to understand on if they are fully okay with what is happening. It is important to ensure good communication with the patient to ensure they are not going to change their mind.

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

From personal experience, interactions can be improved by not making your presence known in the room in every waking moment. It is hard to take a step back on patients who want to be alone but it is important to make sure they have everything they need. I could have done

better by just peeping a head in the room instead of fully going in the room to interrupt the family and the patient.