

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?

Nurses can ensure that a client is kept comfortable in palliative care by providing emotional support and nursing care, such as pain medication. End-of-life care includes helping the dying person manage mental and emotional distress. A client who is near the end of life may experience anxiety and feel depressed. A nurse can help provide psychosocial and spiritual comfort by connecting the client with a counselor. Overall, nurses must ensure that clients are comfortable during palliative care and facilitate an easier transition (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

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

The end of life takes on different forms for many people, depending on their preferences, needs, or choices. Some people choose to die at home, and some seek a hospital or facility until the end. Many clients want to be surrounded by loved ones. Family and friends may not know how to help or what to say, so they stop visiting or become withdrawn. Overall, nurses provide vital support to clients and their families during this time, by incorporating different members in the healthcare field like caseworkers, pastoral care, and counselors (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

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

Nurses may have a sense of the unknown and anxiety as they interact with a person with a life-limiting illness. These feelings can be exacerbated by the reactions of family, friends, and even the medical team. Some clients may initially experience shock and denial when receiving the diagnosis. The first symptoms are usually shock followed by denial. The fear of the unknown is a lot for many clients and families to process (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

Were the feelings or emotions adequately handled?

Many clients struggle to manage their feelings and emotions effectively. Many clients and their families struggle to express their feelings. Family and friends can discuss with the dying person the importance of their relationship. Family and friends who are unable to be present can send a video or audio recording of what they would like to say. This can be a good way to process emotions and feelings. Some do not know how to express their feeling and choose not to think about or talk to the client (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

Was there adequate communication with the ill person?

Some families and friends keep in contact with their loved ones and start to share memories of the good times to help find peace near death. Some clients are not conscious near the end of their lives. When the client is alert, meaningful conversations often take place. This is when family and friends share memories, express love, and provide reassurance, usually giving the loved one permission to go. However, in some situations, clients are unconscious, and it can be challenging for families to find some sense of closure (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

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

The client with a life-limiting illness may experience a range of emotions during interactions with family and friends. They are often influenced by their physical condition and how they communicate with loved ones. Clients are usually aware of their approaching death and may have many different emotions. Some clients find comfort in the presence of family and friends. These interactions can help the person feel valued and understood. In many cases, when the client is unconscious, family members squeeze the hand of the client, which often indicates appreciation. A client's well-being and interactions are closely tied to the quality and tone of communication (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

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

Interactions can be improved by empathetic communication and increased involvement from loved ones. Nurses can help provide support and resources for families by educating the client and their family or by reaching out to various services. Nurses help guide clients through the end-of-life stage by sharing memories, reading aloud, and holding hands with them. By focusing on communication and emotional connection, the quality of the interactions can be improved (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

References

Providing care and comfort at the end of life | National Institute on Aging. (n.d.-d).
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/end-life/providing-care-and-comfort-end-life>