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 a client receiving palliative or hospice care is kept comfortable by assessing the patient's body language, facial expressions, or demeanor. If the client were uncomfortable or in pain, the nurse would be able to see that and could help manage pain or try to resolve the issue at hand. Adding on, some ways that the nurse could provide for the psychosocial comfort of a client could be to play music at a low volume, to help relax and take the client's mind off the pain (NIH, 2022). Along with that, a spiritual intervention that the nurse can do to comfort the client could be to set up a visit with a social worker, or even to pray with them in their room (NIH, 2022). Keeping the client comfortable at their end-of-life stage is extremely important and beneficial.

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

The nurse can provide support for the family or loved ones of the dying client by just being a set of ears and listening to the member explain their feelings or emotions. In this moment, the nurse can stay calm and considerate during this communication to give the member a sense of being heard. The member of the dying client may just appreciate the nurse being present with them and may even provide physical contact like a hug to show consideration (NIH, 2022).

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

Many different waves of emotion can occur when interacting with a person with a life-limiting illness. Depending on the situation, and if that person is in relation or even just someone

that one has just met, death is not an easy topic. Feelings of sadness, confusion, anger, etc., can be felt by the nurse. Most people don't talk about the flip side of death, where one can feel a sense of relief, knowing that the client is not suffering and in pain anymore. It would be in the best interest for the nurse to remain strong and confident within their feelings and shield them from family members, loved ones, and even the client.

Were the feelings or emotions adequately handled?

To adequately handle the feelings or emotions that the nurse goes through while dealing with a client who is at their end-of-life stage, the nurse can grieve with family members or loved ones involved. If there are no family members or loved ones involved, then the nurse can grieve with a trusted co-worker or friend. Everyone handles the loss differently and watching someone whom one cares about slowly fade away is hard, especially to try to handle alone.

Was there adequate communication with the ill person?

In order to ensure adequate communication with the ill person, the nurse must first assess what the client can comprehend cognitively and physically. If the client is self-aware and functioning, the nurse can use kind, straightforward terms to communicate with them (PITC, 2025). If the client is not self-aware or functioning enough to have a conversation, then the nurse must just explain the actions they will be taking and remain respectful.

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

A person with a life-limiting illness might feel overwhelmed during their interaction with the nurse, family members, or loved ones. So many different things are going on in the room, everyone has their own opinion, and the client is the main topic of discussion. This can cause stress and upset the client, which is not anyone’s goal.

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

When interacting with someone who is at the end of their life stage, a beneficial interaction would consist of a healthy, quiet environment. Loud noise is very distracting to the client, along with the nurse, if they are trying to explain certain tasks, or just important information that they must know. When it comes to visitors, disagreeing or arguing in front of the client is not beneficial, and if there are any issues, they should be resolved away from the client in a different room. The client may just want to rest, so interactions may not be the right thing to do at that moment, and visitors should respect that.

References

Providing care and comfort at the end of life | National Institute on Aging. (2022). https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/end-life/providing-care-and-comfort-end-life

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