US Attachment Program for Social Workers in Palliative Care: Observation of good practices and reflections in advanced care planning and bereavement care

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CHOI Hang-suet, Janet (CMC)
• Introduction to the program

• Observations from VITAS HealthCare
  • Interdisciplinary team approach
  • Role of Social Workers in advance care planning
  • Standardized resource kits and mobilize volunteers in bereavement care

• Learning from the Fabula Centre

• Post-training contribution
<table>
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<th>Mon</th>
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<th>Wed</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29 Sep</td>
<td>30 Sep</td>
<td>1 Oct</td>
<td>2 Oct</td>
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<td>Orientation</td>
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<td>Orientation</td>
<td>IDG meeting</td>
<td>Skill Training - Re-membering</td>
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<td>6 Oct</td>
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<td>Skill Training - Re-membering</td>
<td>Practicum - Shadowing</td>
<td>Practicum - Shadowing</td>
<td>Practicum &amp; IDG meeting</td>
<td>Skill Training - Re-membering</td>
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<td>Skill Training - Group Work</td>
<td>Practicum - Shadowing</td>
<td>Practicum - Shadowing</td>
<td>Practicum &amp; IDG meeting</td>
<td>Skill Training - Bereavement</td>
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To equip palliative care MSWs with advanced psychosocial and specific therapeutic knowledge and skills, to meet the complex psychosocial needs of patients/families, develop innovative therapeutic practice and enhance palliative care service quality.
# Palliative Care & Hospice Care in US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Palliative Care</th>
<th>Hospice Care</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim</strong></td>
<td>Maintaining Quality of life</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Patient</strong></td>
<td>Chronic or life-threatening disease</td>
<td>Terminally ill</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Admission Criteria</strong></td>
<td>No Requirement</td>
<td>6 months (by physician)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Treatment Focus</strong></td>
<td>Palliation +/- prolong life</td>
<td>DNR order in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial &amp; Spiritual Care</strong></td>
<td>Not necessarily available</td>
<td>Mandated</td>
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Palliative Care & Hospice Care in US

Admission Requirements:
1. Prognosis: 6 months or less (by 2 physicians)
2. Patient/ Family consent
“Preserving Dignity and the Quality of Life”

VITAS Healthcare
Operates 50 hospice programs in 16 states
4 teams serving ~ 200 cases in the catchment area
Serving both cancer and non-cancer patients, e.g.
  ✓ COPD
  ✓ Alzheimer’s Disease
  ✓ Organs failure, etc.
Mode of Care

- Intensive Comfort Care at Home
- Respite Care
- General Inpatient Care
- Routine Home Care

24 hours on-site support

24 Hours tele-service
Team Members

Patient & Family

Physicians
Nurses
Chaplains
Social Workers
Bereavement Counselors
Home Health Aides
Therapists
Volunteers
Inter-disciplinary group (IDG)
### Table 11.2 Hospice and Palliative Care Overview of Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing supportive counseling and psychotherapy</td>
<td>for individuals, couples, and families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing psychosocial education on an individual and group basis</td>
<td>to patients and their support systems related to coping skills, the hospice and palliative care philosophy, and nonpharmacological symptom relief.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing in-services to other service providers and organizations</td>
<td>and leading community education workshops.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning for discharge, identifying, and linking patients</td>
<td>with resources while also coordinating care and care planning as well as helping patients to navigate the systems related to their care and end-of-life decisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitate advanced care planning and life care planning</td>
<td>and mediate conflicts within families, and between professional caregivers and the organizations responsible for such care.</td>
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<td>Participate in interdisciplinary team care planning conferences and ethics</td>
<td>consultations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Document all professional activities performed for the patient</td>
<td>and his family during and after transition and end-of-life activities decisions have been reached.</td>
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All information modified from NASW Center for Workforce Studies & Social Work Practice (2010). (Dziegielewski, P.293).
- Attended IDG meeting
- Hospital / Home/ facilities visited with nurses for
  - case intake
  - ACP discussion & formulation
  - routine medical checkup / drug titration
  - mission call
- Hospital / Home/ Institution visited with social workers/chaplains for
  - psychosocial supports
  - Assisting in symptoms management
  - ACP discussion & formulation
  - bereavement care
- Attended the memorial meeting organized by facilities
Documentations in ACP

POLST

Five Wishes
Physician Orders For Life-staining Treatment (POLIST): a legal legitimatized advanced directive in US

Five wishes: advanced care planning adopted in VITAS

- **WISH 1** – The Person I Want To Make **Health Care Decisions** For Me When I Can’t Make Them For Myself

- **WISH 2** – My Wish For The Kind Of **Medical Treatment** I Want Or Don’t Want

- **WISH 3** – My Wish For **How Comfortable** I Want To Be

- **WISH 4** – My Wish For How I Want **People To Treat Me**

- **WISH 5** – My Wish For What I Want **My Loved Ones To Know**
Role of social workers in the advance care planning

- Facilitate the discussion in between patients and core caregivers
- Highlight the preference in EOL care
- Formulate the burial preference and select responsible funeral company
- Address to the emotional and relationship problems incurred
- Bridge up related community resources
When Death Has Passed: Living From Here

Maureen Kramlinger, MA, CT.

Innovative Hospice Care
VITAS

Grief and the Holidays
* Periodic bereavement support letters
* Bereavement support group
* Memorial services
* Bereavement support telephone calls and visits
* Referring to VITAS sponsored support groups
MEMORY BEARS OFFER FRIENDSHIP, “Soften” FEELINGS OF GRIEF

In need of a bear hug?

Memory Bear Order Form

Date Material Picked Up  
Picked Up By (employee)  
Caregiver Name  
Address  
Zip Code  
E-mail  

Team #  
Patient Name  
Phone  
City  

Description of clothing provided and any special instruction. (color, style etc.)

These wonderful bears are made by the hands of our caring VITAS Volunteers. There is no cost to you. If you wish to make a donation to VITAS Community Connection (VCC) please contact Laurie Rexford at the number above.

NOTE: Please avoid stretchy fabrics such as thermal, sweaters etc. Appropriate fabrics include shirts, blouses, pajamas, robes, blankets, dresses, jackets and blankets. We make every effort to personalize your bear, but special requests cannot be guaranteed.

Questions? Call or write:
Laurie Rexford  
VITAS Innovative Hospice Care  
7888 Mission Grove Parkway South Suite 200  
Riverside, CA 92508  
(909) 386-6400  
laurie.rexford@vitas.com
“Turning Stories into Narratives”
Lorraine Hedtke, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, Ph.D.
The Fabula Center
Lorraine Hedtke

- Associate Professor in California State University San Bernardino
- Founder of the Fabula Center, provide worldwide professional training in grief psychology

- ‘Re-membering conservation’ : a narrative approach, relational way of thinking about grief
- Ex-VITAS Bereavement Services Manager for the Inland Empire in California
Membership & Membership club

- Membership (a metaphor): a club of significant others in a person’s life
- Even someone dies, the membership is not yet cancelled
- Re-membering keeps membership alive
- Membership can be re-arranged in terms of rank and status
- Rank and status can be varied
Re-membering conservation

Challenge isolation

Link people with shared values, hope

Re-membering conversation
Post-training contribution

- Sharing sessions have been conducted at the journal clubs among PC Unit in 3 hospitals
- Presented at PC MSW grand round on 18.3.15
- Enrolled in the Advanced Training Program in Palliative Care for Allied Health Professionals in 2015-2017
- Participated in the committee of the 10-day Training Program on Palliative Care for Medical Social Workers 2016

**Structured continuing Interdisciplinary trainings can enhance MSW’s competency to articulate the complex service needs**
References:

* http://www.fabulacenter.com
* http://www.vitas.com/
Thank you