Action Research Project for the Integration of Palliative Care into Heart Failure Management


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Setting
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown, St. Francis Hospice, Raheny and GP Family Practice in Fairview, North Dublin.

Background and Context
- Within the Irish setting and particular with in the acute sector, there is compelling evidence that patients suffering from chronic illness other than cancer do not always receive a palliative care approach or specialist palliative care (Fitzsimons et al., 2007, O’Leary and Tiernan, 2008).
- In August 2008 The European Society of Cardiology recommended a collaborative approach from GP’s, Specialist Heart Failure Services and Specialist Palliative Care Services. The steering committee of this project reflects this recommendation.
- The principles of palliative care must be embedded into disease management frameworks.” Palliative Care for All Report (2008)

Action Research
Action research is a systematic form of inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, critical, and undertaken by the participants of the inquiry (McCutcheon, G. & Jung, B. 1990). It is unique in bridging the theory/practice gap affecting positive change within health settings. Data gathered will also be shared with a wider audience.

Problem Identification
End of Life Review
Questionnaire
Focus Groups
Ethical Approval

Educational Needs Identified
- 97% have no qualification in palliative care
- 98% had attended no palliative care training in the last two years
- 94% interested in attending palliative care education for heart failure patients
- 69% did not know the principles of palliative care

References
The Irish Hospice Foundation & Health Services Executive (2008) Palliative Care for All: Integrating Palliative Care into Disease Management Frameworks. Dublin: IHF & HSE.

This research project is jointly funded by the Irish Hospice Foundation, the Irish Heart Foundation and the Baxter International Foundation and is supported by the HSE. Two further action research projects are examining the framework for palliative interventions in the care pathway of people with advanced respiratory disease and those with dementia.

Contact points for further information:
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For further details of the Palliative Care for All Programme see www.hospice-foundation.ie JUNE 2011