Understanding a Palliative Approach from an Education Perspective

Fraser Health Research Café
November 20, 2012
1145 to 1205 hours

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Funded by the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research | BC Nursing Research Initiative
Objective: Preparing for a Palliative Approach Research Question

1. To answer the research question ➔ How do we best prepare nurses, taking into account context and skill mix, to integrate a palliative approach?

2. To share preliminary findings as an outcome of our education initiatives
   - Provincial Nurse Survey ~ link to education
   - Scoping Review
   - Symposium
   - Journal Publication
What is a Palliative Approach?

- “An approach to care focused on improving the quality of life of persons with life-limiting conditions and their family. It is provided in all health care settings. It involves physical, psychological, social and spiritual care. The palliative approach is not delayed until the end stages of an illness but is applied earlier to provide active comfort-focused care and a positive approach to reducing suffering. It also promotes understanding of loss and bereavement.”

Initiative for a Palliative Approach in Nursing: Education and Leadership
Why is it important to understand what a palliative approach is?

- “Eventually, everyone dies – many more of us after gradual physical and mental decline than cancer. Early recognition of those patients, [clients, residents] with advancing illness who would benefit from supportive and palliative care is the key to good management”.

Best Practices for Educating Healthcare Providers in Palliative Care: A Scoping Review

PURPOSE

- The purpose was to systematically review the literature to determine the best available evidence for educating health care providers in palliative care.

METHOD

The following databases were searched using database specific terms related to palliative care and education: CINAHL, MEDLINE, Embase, ERIC and AgeLine. Articles were limited to those published between 2001 and 2011.

Pesut, B.,1 McLeod, B.,2 Stajduhar, K.,3 Sawatzky, R.,4 Erbacker, L.1
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**FINDINGS:**

- The search yielded 139 studies published between 2001 and 2011.
- Trends indicate a steadily increasing number of articles over the past decade.
- The majority of studies have their origin in the United States followed by the United Kingdom and Canada.
- Teaching learning strategies included lectures, group discussions, case studies and less traditional approaches such as email education, expert panels and self reflection.
- Total hours and duration of education varied widely.
- Educational outcomes were measured through self-report of learning, objective knowledge, attitudes, ways of being, comfort and self-efficacy. Fifty-four percent of studies addressed the reliability/validity of their measures.
- Most common study design was pre/post test.
CONCLUSION:

- 125 (90%) of the 139 studies reported positive outcomes from the education intervention.
- Although there is a substantial body of literature evaluating various palliative care educational strategies for healthcare professionals, it is difficult to draw conclusions in light of the tendency toward descriptive designs and the diversity of educational content and delivery strategies.
Provincial Nurse Survey about a Palliative Approach: Section C – Knowledge and Education

- To understand what and how nurses have learned about caring for persons with life-limiting chronic conditions and what methods help nurses to learn.
- To understand current knowledge related to education such as basic education, continuing education and clinical practice
- Preferred methods for receiving information
- Types of education most likely to use
- Ability to use a computer
- Utilization of an online course, seminar, webinar
- To understand what resources assist nurses in learning about a palliative approach?
Education: Sources of Knowledge

- Practice experience, rather than basic or continuing education is rated as the greatest source of knowledge for the dimensions of a palliative approach.
- Face to face learning was the most preferred method for receiving education for all providers.
- Colleagues were the source all providers identified as most often going to when they did not know something.
An Important Survey Finding: Confidence in Using a Computer

83% of all providers rated themselves as 3 or greater confidence in using a computer using a scale of 0-5

- Care Aids 70%
  - 5 (very confident) 25%
- LPNs 93%
  - 5 (very confident) 42%
- RNs 90%
  - 5 (very confident) 38%
1st Symposium on Translating Knowledge for a Palliative Approach in Nursing
May 2, 2012; Kelowna, BC

- Over 50 attendees from throughout the province gathered to discuss education in a palliative approach ~ clinicians, researchers, educators, administrators, family care-givers, regulators and policy makers.

- The participants discussed how to use the best evidence to educate nurses to deliver a palliative approach to care for people living with life-limiting chronic conditions in all sectors of care through research presentations, panel responses; consensus building exercises, strategic visioning an evening presentation.
Symposium: Several themes characterized learning's of the day.....

- Competence & Confidence: Preparation for Care
- Language and Labels: Concepts for Care
- Legos and Rivers: Metaphors for Care
- Knowing and Knowings: Challenging Hierarchies of Knowledge for Care
- Places and Spaces: Environments for Care
The context of nursing practice is important as we educate for a palliative approach because many barriers exist both within the health care system and our own mental maps that require modification and re-learning. We can teach nurses to consider prognoses and to begin conversations around goals of care but that inevitably provides an entry point into the specialized field of palliative care. Here is where a whole new set of expectations arise for nurses for which they have varying degrees of confidence. And the degree to which they have access to specialized knowledge and care influences the degree of knowledge and confidence they must have themselves.
An exploration of the nursing role in rural areas in the context of palliative care. What did we learn?

- **Failure to identify** and support those who are dying may have adverse consequences including poor symptom management, lack of advance care planning and failure to attend to important psychosocial and spiritual issues. These issues are particularly relevant for nurses working in non-specialized palliative settings such as acute medical units, residential care and home health.
Space for living...space for dying: Facilitating a palliative approach in rural nursing

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Advances in Nursing Science:
October/December 2012 - Volume 35 - Issue 4 - p 288–304
A Palliative Approach:
Celebrating 60th Wedding Anniversary, November 14, 2012
Webinar: Educating nurses for a palliative approach
Presented by Dr Barb Pesut & Barbara McLeod, MSN
November 27, 2012  2:00-3:00 PM