



Palliative and End- of- Life Care

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Definition of palliative care

An approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual .

◆ Palliative care aims to relieve symptoms and improve the quality of living and dying for a person and/or family living with a life threatening illness

◆ The term "palliative care" is increasingly used with regard to diseases other than cancer such as – chronic, progressive pulmonary disorders – renal disease – chronic heart failure – HIV/AIDS and – progressive neurological conditions

Hospice care

- ◆ Hospice care is given when there is life expectancy of 6 months or less
- ◆ Hospice care begins after treatment of the disease is stopped and when it is clear that the person is not going to survive the illness
- ◆ Hospice care decreases the family's likelihood of having a complicated grief and prepares family members for their loved one's death
- ◆ Both palliative care and hospice care provide comfort

A hospice care team includes:

- ◆ Doctors
- ◆ Nurses
- ◆ Spiritual counselors
- ◆ Social workers.
- ◆ Pharmacists.
- ◆ Other professionals. Speech, physical and occupational therapists can provide therapy, if needed.
- ◆ Bereavement counselors. Trained bereavement counselors offer support and guidance after the death of a loved one in hospice.

Five Most Common Symptoms

- ◆ Pain
- ◆ Nausea/vomiting
- ◆ Breathlessness
- ◆ Weight loss
- ◆ Weakness / fatigue

Dimensions of end of life care- Nursing care

- ◆ Alleviation of distressing symptoms (palliation)
- ◆ Communication and conflict resolution
- ◆ Withdrawing ,limiting ,or withholding of therapy
- ◆ Emotional and psychological care of the patient and family
- ◆ Caregiver organizational support

(POLST)

- ◆ The Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment, (POLST) is a physician's order that outlines a plan of end of life care reflecting both a patient's preferences concerning care at life's end and a physician's judgment based on a medical evaluation.

- ◆ The POLST form is completed by a patient's physician in conjunction with thorough conversation with the patient regarding the patient's current and future health conditions and treatment preferences.
- ◆ Both the physician and patient must sign the POLST
- ◆ If the patient lacks capacity to make medical decisions, the patient's legally recognized decision-maker can participate in both completing and signing the POLST form.

What is on the POLST Form?

- ◆ Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- ◆ Preferred Medical Interventions
- ◆ Artificially Administered Nutrition
- ◆ Antibiotics



Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)

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- ◆ A culturally competent assessment includes asking about specific cultural and religious beliefs that the patient views as important especially as they relate to their end of life care.
- ◆ Nurses must include family members in the assessment process and encourage everyone to communicate their needs and goals