

A Good Death

Munim Deen

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Objective:

- To evaluate the quality of hospital end-of-life care at OU Medical Center
- To Compare the perceptions of those who died in...
 - ...regular wards/ICU under care of their regular team versus
 - ...regular wards/ICU under care of palliative care team versus
 - ...comfort care suites under

Methods Overview:

- Survey of family members (next of kin) of deceased.
- Names and addresses of next of kin are NOT in EMR
- The Chaplain's Office maintains handwritten records of every death, WITH next of kin contact information – this information was utilized

Survey Details:

- Combination of questions from multiple sources
 - Quality of Dying and Death instrument (Patrick et al. 2001)
 - HCAHPS – Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems Program (HCAHPS 2013)
- Relevant questions used
 - Emphasis on questions that could be used for concrete end of life care improvements
- Irrelevant questions eliminated
 - Questions dealing with death in non-hospital settings.

Selection of Respondent Pool.

- Limited to next of kin of those that died from non-traumatic causes
 - Only those over 18 (for 2014 study – and will be continued in 2015)
 - Those below 18 (new for 2015 study)
- Death was less than 365 days and more than 90 days
 - To not unduly burden those dealing with very fresh grief
 - To eliminate those whose memories would be less detailed
- Numbers:
 - 2014 – 465
 - 2015 – count being finalized (this afternoon, actually)

Establishing Contact

- Initial letter acknowledging grief and expressing sympathy, and also mentioning upcoming survey
 - Reading level (2014): 10.4
 - Reading level (2105): 5.4
- Some recipients contacted the Chaplain's Office requesting to NOT be sent a survey.
 - Received a sympathy letter
 - Reading level (2014): 7.5
 - Reading level (2015): 6.1
- Survey (with introductory instructional letter) sent out approximately two weeks later – to everyone who didn't indicate otherwise
 - Including pre-paid return envelope
 - [Survey](#) could also be completed online
 - Survey reading level: 5.1

Respondents

- N = 52
- 71% female, 29% male
- 80% White, 14% Native American/Alaska Native, 2% African American, 2% Hispanic/Latino, 2% Other

Discussion Moving Forward

- Methodology
 - Important problems with ‘sudden’ – related skipping of questions.
 - Also confusion regarding the location of the death
 - Survey numbers don’t add up to hospital records.
 - This hampers analysis with respect to main study question.
 - These issues are being addressed with updating of the survey
- The low number of respondents is likely due to the short window for responses – will be increased for 2015, particularly for adults.
- Possible readability barriers have hopefully been addressed with 2015’s updated documents.
- Pediatric patient expansion
 - The survey is being tailored as we speak for pediatric patients

Thank You

Comments and Questions