

The changing landscape of palliative care & implications for allied health clinicians

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National survey of Allied Health clinicians

- Cross sectional online survey of OT, PT, SW, SP, Psychology, Dietitians, MT
- 42 item survey piloted for content & face validity with expert advisory group
- 217 survey responses, 94% female: 187 useable responses to Q1
- Inductive conceptual content analysis, → categories, subcodes & themes

Please describe what you think palliative care involves for patients, families & the health practitioner

Themes

1. Palliative care employs a client centred model of care
2. Acknowledgement of living whilst dying
3. Interdisciplinary palliative care interventions provide active care in a range of domains
4. Characteristics of palliative care teams & settings

1. A client centred model of care

- Aims to ↑ comfort, ↓ stress
- Holistic care
- Actively values patient and family wishes
- Shift from 'curative' focus to prioritising patient goals
- Allied health clinicians employ a person centred approach
- Supports the patient's dignity

2. Acknowledgement of living whilst dying

- A focus is placed on living the life that is left – quality over quantity
- Includes planning for future care, for discharge, for death
- Extends beyond patient care into grief & bereavement support
- Considers death & dying as routine part of care – preparation, acceptance, discussion, ‘good’ death
- Supporting adjustment to change/deterioration

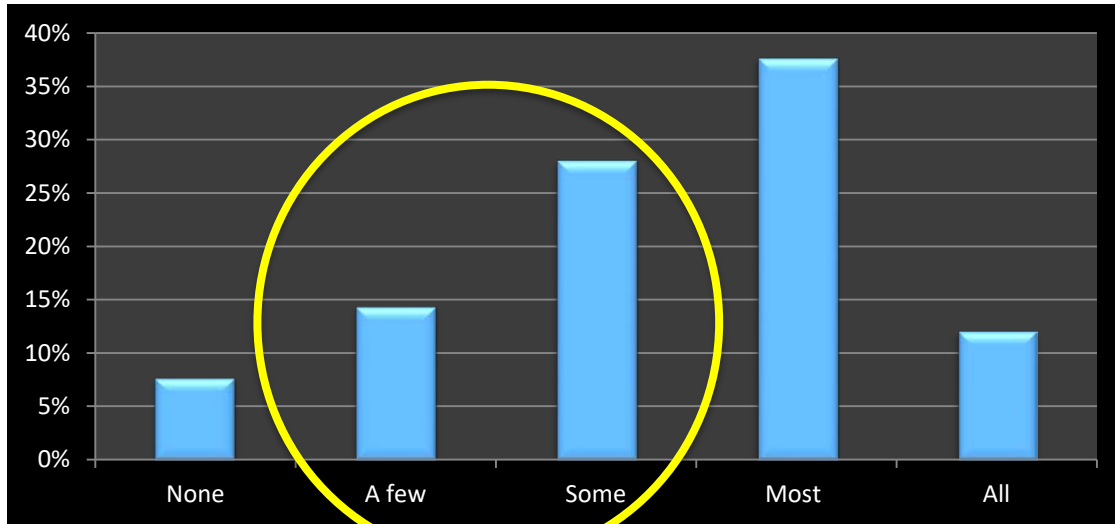
3. Interdisciplinary care in a range of domains

- Active approach to symptom management
- Proactive approach to care, implemented from point of diagnosis
- Allied health discipline specific support which includes
 - - support of spiritual, emotional, physical, social, & cultural issues
 - - education, counselling, resources, service coordination
- Rehabilitation to ↑, optimise, maintain function
- Assistance to engage/participate in meaningful activities

4. Characteristics of palliative care teams & settings

- Interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary team approach
- Allied health clinicians require certain personal qualities:
empathy, patience, creativity, flexibility, determination, care/compassion, honesty, respect, self awareness
- Implemented in a range of settings – home, IP settings, may include respite
- Duration of care provision is unpredictable

Patients who might die in next 12 months (N=207)



Work setting

- 52% - hospital
- 32% - community
- 10% - residential care
- 8% - private practice
- 33% - specialist PC

Implications for Allied Health clinical practice

- Need for development of new skill sets:
 - symptom management (SOB, pain, fatigue)
 - developing conversations about dying/living whilst dying,
 - encountering grief
- Advocacy regarding rehab, symptom Mx, &/or extended length of stay to achieve an *optimal* outcome for patients & caregivers in generalist setting
- Debriefing? Managing your own responses

Cultural considerations

- *Cultural considerations. Providing end of life care for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples (PEPA)*
 - ask Qs, preferences?
 - family spokesperson?
- QOL & pain Mx, Finishing up, sorry business, not going to get better
- Importance of silence, time to process
- Advance care yarning – develop an advance care plan

Limitations & resources

- Dependent on partner organisations for distribution
- Participants were self selecting, existing knowledge, may not be representative of allied health population
- CareSearch: <https://www.caresearch.com.au/Caresearch/Default.aspx>
- End-of-Life Essentials:
<https://www.caresearch.com.au/CareSearch/tabid/3866/Default.aspx>
- PEPA (Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach)

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“Palliative Care involves the management of symptoms whether they be physical - management of pain, nausea etc, functional - difficulty participating in everyday activities, preferred occupations & emotional - grief & loss, adjustment issues.

It can involve empowerment where patients & family members are supported to arrange legal & end of life paperwork. For families it can involve education & support to help them to care for their family member safely & successfully.”