An investigation of palliative care nurses’ perceptions and views of an extended hours community nursing service at the Northern Adelaide Palliative Service.

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Abstract

Background

Palliative care as a health specialty has undergone dramatic growth across the globe since the 1960’s. With this growth has come an array of service models, providing palliative care in a variety of ways. The situation in Australia is no different, and the inequity of access to palliative care has been noted at both a commonwealth and state government level.

Purpose

This study investigated the perceptions and views of the nurses into an extended hour’s community nursing service at Northern Adelaide Palliative Service. The data obtained was intended to identify if there was any perceived need for a change in service delivery and any potential benefits to the current client group.

Methods

This is a mixed method study, combining the collection of qualitative data from the current nursing staff and an analysis of the after-hours telephone calls to the service. Nursing staff were interviewed individually using a semi-structured approach. Telephone data reviewed was information already collected by Northern Adelaide Palliative Service, and all data was de-identified prior to review.
Results

Data gathered from the interviews revealed that whilst there was support for the concept of an extended hour’s community service in general, this support did not translate to the local setting. A lack of consensus existed between current nurses of Northern Adelaide Palliative Care Service in relation to both the need for an extended hour’s service and the potential benefits to the current client group. The telephone data identified that nearly a third of all calls received could have been responded to by a nurse, with the majority of these calls being received after eight in the morning until ten at night.

Conclusion

Overall the data obtained is not convincing in indicating either a desire or need for an extended hours community nursing service at Northern Adelaide Palliative Service. Despite this the management and care of the palliative patient in the after-hours period continues to be an area of concern. It would be beneficial to collect additional data from all users of the service to obtain their view on the effectiveness and accessibility of the service.
Signed Statement

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution.

To the best of my knowledge, this work contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except where referenced within the text.

I consent to this copy of my thesis when deposited in the School of Nursing Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Jane Grigson
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