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Balancing Quality of Life With Comfort: Educating Medical Surgical Nurses About Pain Management for the Adult Hospice Patient: An Integrative Literature Review

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Background: There is a gap of information about end of life care provided in a hospital inpatient setting for pain management of patients. Studies have been conducted to explore patient and nurse experiences in inpatient hospice programs, but not a lot of research has been done exploring the experiences of medical surgical floor inpatient hospice patients being taken care of by medical surgical nurses not specifically trained in hospice care

Objectives: To explore if current community hospice guidelines provide effective approach between quality of life in the adult hospice patient and management of pain and anxiety associated with dying.

Methods: This integrative literature review was conducted using keywords “nursing, hospice, hospice care, and nursing and pain management” to search literature between 2000 to 2018.

Results: Throughout all of the literature reviewed, a common theme of continuing education surfaced to the front lines of managing pain and quality of life with hospice patients in an acute hospital setting. The symptom management model was noted to be a great tool while caring for end of life patients in order to bring the barriers into focus and address them properly. Barriers included the person, the environment, and the health and illness components.

Conclusion: This study identified the definition of total pain when discussing hospice care to include the physical, social, spiritual, and psychological aspects of the patient. The world of nursing is a constant wheel of learning, educating, and implementing new evidence based practices into a holistic care process.

Keywords: nursing, hospice, hospice care, and nursing and pain management