

Implications for Research, Policy, or Practice. EHR phenotypes may shape identification of seriously-ill patients at high risk of having palliative care needs for both research and clinical purposes.

Integrating Palliative Care Social Workers into Sub-Acute Settings: Feasibility of the ALIGN Intervention Trial (S825)



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Objectives

1. Describe the justification for methodological approach in this pragmatic trial design.
2. Discuss the justification for the ALIGN intervention and preliminary results of the intervention in the SNF setting.

Original Research Background. Sub-acute rehabilitation (SNF), intended for short stay care transitions, cares for 1/3 of older adults in the last six months of life with low penetration of hospice and palliative care. ALIGN (Assessing & Listening to Individual Goals and Needs) is a palliative care social worker led intervention aimed to improve quality of life (QOL), goals of care (GOC) alignment, and provide support to patients and caregivers.

Research Objectives. Determine the feasibility of conducting a trial of ALIGN in older persons and their caregivers admitted to SNF and conduct exploratory analysis of ALIGN vs usual care on patient goals of care alignment (curative, life-prolonging/rehabilitative, comfort), QOL (FACT-G), and caregiver reaction assessment (CRA) and burden (Zarit).

Methods. To conduct a pilot pragmatic randomized step wedge design of the ALIGN intervention versus usual care in three SNFs with 120 older adults and caregivers (optional) admitted with advanced medical illness (LACE score ≥ 7) to determine feasibility and preliminary efficacy.

Results. To date, 362 SNF patients met illness criteria and the team was able to approach 127 patients within required 72 hours of admission. Enrollment rate for patients = 68%, caregivers = 36%. Caregivers are

often not available to participate in-person, alternate approaches are being tested. Baseline GOC alignment = 50%. Baseline FACT-G = 70.0 (+16.9) demonstrating compromised QOL, CRA Self Esteem scale (1-5) = 1.8 (+0.5) showing some benefit finding, and Zarit = 14.5 (+9.2) showing moderate burden.

Conclusion. A pragmatic trial of the ALIGN intervention is feasible and needed based on low GOC alignment, low QOL, and moderate caregiver burden.

Implications for Research, Policy, or Practice. The current model for SNF does not address the palliative care needs of patients, ALIGN has potential to be an effective, scalable, reproducible intervention for to improve palliative care outcomes within sub-acute settings.

The Most Common Reflections of the Dying (S826)



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Objectives

1. Discuss the importance of learning about the most common end-of-life reflections.
2. Identify the most common reflections of the dying.

Original Research Background. Reflecting on one's life can be therapeutic for dying people. Knowledge about common end-of-life reflections may increase caregivers' ability to identify appropriate occasions to initiate or facilitate therapeutic life review.

Research Objectives. Identifying the most common end-of-life reflections.

Methods. One hundred twenty-three nurses who were HPNA members responded to an anonymous survey. Participants were asked to list the most commonly expressed reflections that patients have about their lives. A coding scheme was determined based on themes identified in participants' responses. Two independent raters coded all the responses. The overall inter-rater agreement (Cohen's kappa) was $k = .823$. After the data were independently coded, the two raters consulted to resolve discrepancies and generate a final set of codes.

Results. The top five end-of-life reflections themes emerged from the data were; concern for loved ones, regret, spirituality, legacy, and lack of acceptance/readiness. Nurses were more likely to report that patients were concerned about their families (50.41%) than their own morbidity/mortality (36.59%), $\chi^2(1) = 9.39$, $p = .002$ and were more likely to report that patients expressed concerns about their loved ones as opposed to gratitude for them (10.57%), $\chi^2(1) = 78.06$, $p < .001$.