
Palliative Care and Symptom Management Services at CMO

Recently, CMO's Network Care Management department has initiated nurse practitioner managed, palliative care and symptom management services. Easing the burden on providers and caregivers, research has demonstrated that palliative care improves quality of life, the satisfaction for patients and their families and also helps patients complete life prolonging treatments.

Palliative care addresses all sources of suffering whether it be physical pain and discomfort, emotional suffering, social or spiritual unease. Through CMO's palliative care program and the established alliance with community based programs, our members are receiving the care they need without unnecessary visits to the hospital.

According to Linda Rodman, manager of the Palliative Care Program at CMO, there are three important messages to convey to the community about palliative care. The first is that

historically, palliative care has been identified with Hospice and end-of-life care. However, principles of palliative care are now increasingly being applied to chronic disease management. By controlling symptoms and setting realistic goals of care, palliative care is preserving a patient's quality of life. Secondly, on a practical level, palliative care consultation in the hospital is aiding the care team in setting goals of care for patients with chronic illness who are not near the end of life, but are facing a progression of illness with associated symptoms as they continue life-prolonging treatment. Lastly, it is important for the community to identify outpatient palliative care and chronic disease management as an emerging area of expertise which will allow improved quality of life for patients with chronic disease.

It is a fact that mankind is living longer with chronic disease. The process of dying can take months and years and is

often prolonged by the efforts to keep patients alive. As a consequence, their sense of dignity and quality of life may be undermined and their suffering can escalate. With this outcome in mind, CMO is determined to continue educating staff as well as network primary care physicians of the appropriateness of palliative care at any point in an illness to manage symptoms.

If you are unfamiliar with the palliative care and symptom management services being offered by CMO or would like to discuss the challenges you are facing with managing chronic illness, please contact:

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