



Association for
Palliative Medicine

Article of the Month

March 2018

Phase of Illness in palliative care: Cross-sectional analysis of clinical data from community, hospital and hospice patients.

Palliat Med. 2018 Feb;32(2):404-412

Mather H, Guo P, Firth A, et al.

A secondary data analysis of 1317 patients (75% had a diagnosis of cancer) who attended palliative care services in the south of England looked at patient, family and carers needs using validated measures and associations with phase of illness. In unstable and deteriorating phases, pain, physical problems and psycho-spiritual issues were significantly higher than in the stable and dying phases. In the multivariate analysis, family and carers needed more support in the deteriorating phase than the unstable phase of illness; there was no association between psycho-spiritual problems and phase of illness. The authors concluded that the phase of illness can be considered as a measure of palliative care needs.

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Can patient-reported measurements of pain be used to improve cancer pain management? A systematic review and meta-analysis.

BMJ Support Palliat Care.

Adam R, Burton CD, Bond CM, et al.

This systematic review and meta-analysis looked at whether providing feedback to patients and/or professionals from patient-reported pain measurements influenced management of cancer pain. There were 29 studies included (22 trials of 20 interventions; 5234 participants). The narrative synthesis reported that feedback of pain measurements increased discussions between patients and professionals about pain and/or symptoms. Twelve studies were included in the meta-analysis, there was moderate heterogeneity. This analysis showed statistically significant reduction in average pain intensity in the intervention group.

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