

An innovative approach to community nursing



Introduction

Community palliative CNS at The Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice, Margaret O'Donnell, identified many patients who were referred were in crisis with little understanding of their condition/medications/and how to manage symptoms. To meet the needs of these patients an early intervention pilot was established.



The Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice

Aim

The overall aim of this pilot was to offer **early intervention** in **symptom management** and **psychological support**, for **patients diagnosed with life limiting conditions** by providing **early access to specialist palliative care**. The hope was that this would **reduce the episodes of crisis** noted by GPs and district nurses, and **help to support patients and their families**.

Method

A seven-month pilot was initiated, GPs were asked to **refer patients with life-limiting illness to an outreach clinic** held in the local health centre. **A qualitative and quantitative audit** was undertaken post-pilot period. Activity at the clinic was monitored: **patient referrals and outcomes**, feedback regarding the **care experience was sought from patients** who attended the outreach clinic, **healthcare professionals were asked for feedback** regarding their experience of this service.

Results (June to December 2015)

Total referrals received/reason for referral/duration of care/patient outcome continuing care of patients from the pilot/other hospice services utilised feedback from patients and healthcare professions on their experience.

17 new patients referred to clinic

8 for emotional and psychological support

9 for pain and symptom management

62 & 244 DAYS DURATION OF CARE

Resulting in referral to other hospice services

7 to occupational therapist

+ **10** to family support services

+ **4** to day services

+ **1** to complementary therapy

“I believe the clinic in Castlemilk breaks down fears about hospice care, allowing engagement with patients and their families.”

Conclusions

- 1 **Uptake** and **referral** to the outreach clinic was, and continues to be **good**.
- 2 A number of **patients benefited** from the **support** of the **wider hospice team** including **occupational therapy, physiotherapy, family support services, complementary services** and **hospice day services**.
- 3 **Feedback** from patients who attended the outreach clinic was **very positive**.
- 4 **Improved links** and **joint working with GPs** noted from the feedback obtained.

Recommendations

- 1 **Successful pilot** resulted in **continuation** of weekly Castlemilk **clinic**.
- 2 **Establish a working group** to scope the **potential expansion** of the **services** offered at the Castlemilk clinic, including the resources required.
- 3 **Establish a working group** to scope potential to **replicate** this model in **other community areas**.