

Patient choice: a case study
exploring Haematology and
Palliative care working as a team.

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Overview

- History
- Treatment
- Nursing intervention
- Discussion
- Implications for practice

Mr M

- 66 years old, supportive family
- Relapsed Acute Myeloid Leukaemia
- Opts for 'supportive treatment'
- Aims to remain at home
- Accepts referral to Community Palliative Care Team (CPCT)

Main issues

- Low counts, particularly platelets (Hb 8.1, WCC 18.9, Plts 7)
- Occasional nose bleeds
- Chest pain
- Constipation with over-flow

Challenges

- Maintain at home with day-ward support
- Minimal transfusions
- Attempt to integrate palliative care and haematology
- Fulfil patients wish to die at home.
- Risk of catastrophic haemorrhage

How this was achieved

- Admission only when requested by patient
- Open, sensitive discussion
- Patient happy for 'supportive care'
- Updates with CPCT
- Supporting the family
- Hope and humour

Outcome

- Patients last in-patient admission short
- Patient and family given opportunity to re-evaluate
- Coping strategies
- Risk of catastrophic bleed discussed and plan in place
- Open communication with CPC nursing team

The evidence..

Boyce et al (2003)

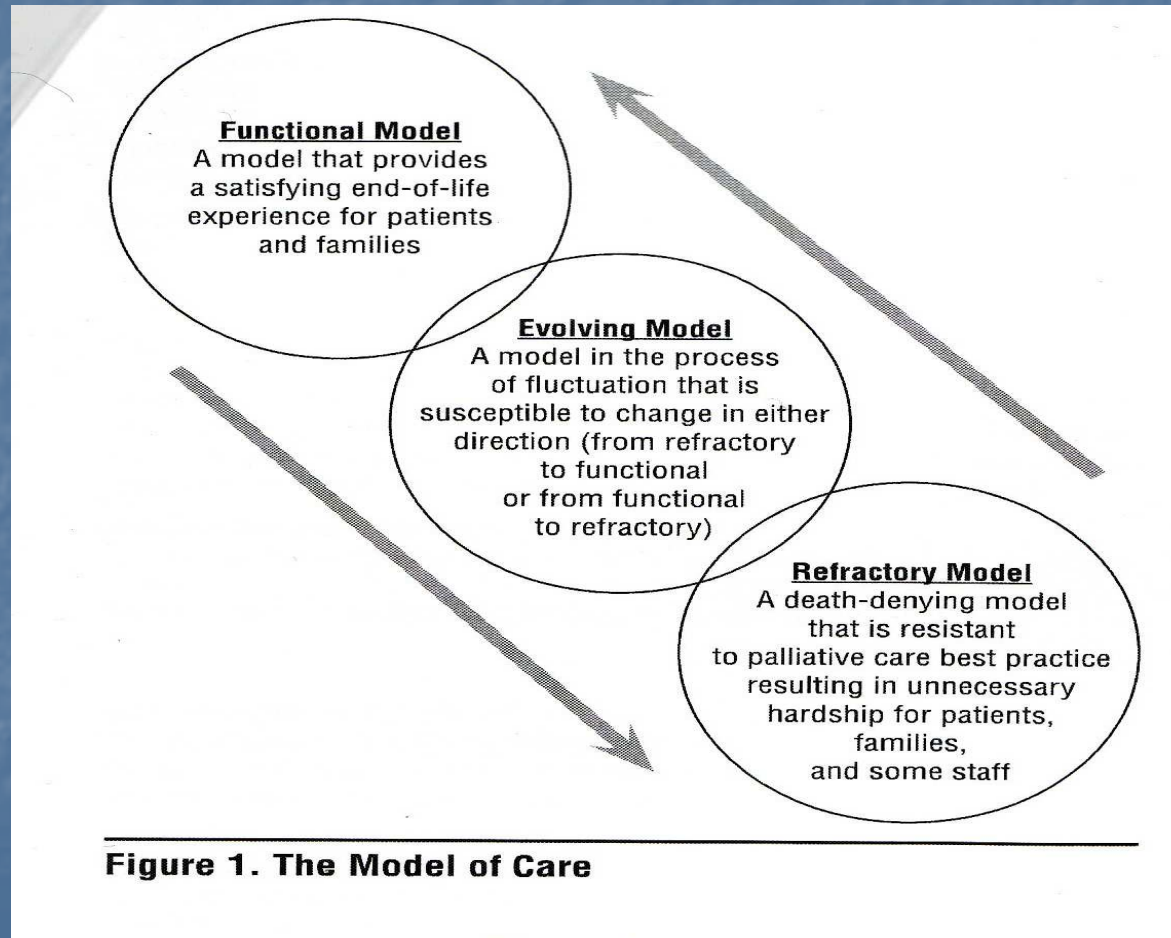
Proactive palliative care choices for haematology day unit patients.

- Developed a flexible model
- Integration of services
- Patients accessing palliative care services of their choice

Contd..

- Mc Grath P and Holewa H.(2007)
- Description of an Australian Model for End-of-Life Care in Patients With Hematological Malignancies. ONF.34 (1) 79-85.
- Qualitative study, 25 nursing interviews
- Presented a trilogy of overlapping models

McGrath and Holewa's Model of Care



Implications

- Haematology patients may not have access to palliative care services
- An integrated service may lead to improved patient outcomes
- Haematology nurses must not underestimate the benefits of addressing end-of-life issues
- Transition from curative to palliative care.



Affirms life

Promotes quality of life

Treats the person

Supports the family

References

- Boyce A., Mc Hugh M., and Lyon P. (2003) Proactive palliative care choices for haematology day care patients. *International Journal of Palliative Nursing*. 9: (12) 544-550.
- Hicks F. (2003) Last days of life. In: Booth S, Burera E, eds. *Palliative Care Consultations- Haemato-oncology*. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 237-48.
- Kissane D, Yates P. (2003) Psychological and existential distress. In O'Connor M, Aranda S eds. *Palliative care nursing: a guide to practice*, second edition. Ausmed Publications, 229-44.
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Thank you