Paediatric Referrals to a Community Specialist Palliative Care Service: A Retrospective Profile

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Background

The provision of specialist palliative care to children with life-limiting illnesses is an evolving service internationally.

Referrals to community specialist palliative care teams (CSPCT) are increasing to provide continued support and quality collaborative care to patients and family in the home.

Children with life-limiting conditions can have complex symptomatology and an unpredictable disease trajectory, therefore it is important that CSPCT have an understanding of the patient cohort.

Aims

To evaluate the profile of paediatric referrals to a CSPCT.

To assess the indication for referral.

To demonstrate collaboration with other healthcare professionals (HCP) involved.

Methods

Retrospective chart review of patients aged 0-16 years referred to a CSPCT from July 2013 to July 2017.

Data was collected using Microsoft Excel.

Conclusions

Majority of referrals were received from the paediatric service for patients with neurodegenerative disorders.

CSPCT, in collaboration with other HCP facilitated end of life care at home for 91% of patients.

This review gives an insight into the complexity of this population. The introduction of Complexity and Outcome measurement recording will assist with service evaluation and improvement in the future.

Results

Patient Profile

- 26 Patients
- 15 Male
- 11 Female

- 14 Patients – Seizure Disorder
- 19 Patients – Enteral Feeding
- 23 patients died - 91% of deaths occurred at home
- 3 patients - Discharged

Indication:

- Symptom Management
- Advanced Illness
- Clinical Deterioration
- Family Support
- Parent request
- End of Life care

Age at Referral:

- Minimum 4 Days
- Maximum 15 Years

Source of referral (N):

- Paediatric (17)
- Oncology (4)
- Haematology (3)
- General Practice (1)
- Neurosurgery (1)

Collaboration:

Hospital teams
Jack & Jill Foundation
Public Health Nurse
Night Nursing
Community Outreach Nurse
Allied Healthcare Professionals
General Practitioners

List of sources: