

Evaluation and Implementation of a Palliative Care Referral Process

Brent Cooper
Washington State University

Abstract

Palliative care (PC) has proven benefits of a holistic inter-professional approach to increasing quality of life, reducing suffering, increasing communication between families, patients, and providers, and decreasing the healthcare cost of end-of-life care by reducing the amount of hospitalizations and re-hospitalizations (Rabow et al., 2013). Even with these benefits, patients remain under-referred to palliative care or encounter a lack of local options. A mixed-methods quality improvement project at a local clinic evaluated and implemented a customized palliative care referral template. The data extracted from the referral template revealed an increase in referrals (n=65) and gathering of unique palliative care data.

Keywords: palliative care, referrals, outpatient