



St. Richard's Hospice
CARING FOR LIFE

Improving quality and patient experience by learning from death reviews - the hospice way

Over recent decades, multiple health care inquiries including Shipman, Mazars, Frances, and Gosport have identified failings in care.⁽¹⁾ These have provided health care systems with important recommendations to support patient care and identify issues before irreversible harm or avoidable deaths occur.

Additional research has suggested that quality gaps can also be identified through mortality review.⁽²⁾ In June 2019, the commissioners for St Richard's Hospice asked us to perform reviews on 5% of our deaths.

AIMS

- To create a hospice specific learning from deaths tool to support both random review and specific closer inspection into hospice deaths.
- To take a wider learning and development approach to improve quality of our care and patient experience in a robust and time effective way.

METHODS

We examined mortality review models including the National Mortality Case Record Review Programme's Structure judgement review⁽³⁾ and the Gold Standards Framework's significant event analysis⁽⁴⁾ to create a learning from deaths tool, which could be specific to a hospice in-patient unit.

This tool helps identify near miss events and recognises areas for improvement that do not reach the threshold for triggering our incident reporting process. The review group led by our Care Quality Lead, includes input from senior nursing staff, the medical team, and an external medical reviewer.

RESULTS

Two patients are reviewed monthly. These patients are either identified randomly by a clinical administrator; by multidisciplinary team request, following a sudden or unexpected death; or resulting from family feedback. An action tracker is reviewed monthly, and an annual review identifies themes or wider actions.

This process has become a key trigger for quality improvement in the hospice. It has also prompted identification of a direct pathway to request hospital mortality review. It has enhanced our open culture for learning and augmented service development to improve the quality of care for patients and families.

Nursing care

Medical care

Family and patient

Allied Health Professionals' care

Family support care

Spiritual care



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References

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