Supporting the Role of the Nurse in Advance Care Planning on a Hematology/Stem Cell Transplant Inpatient Unit

Hazel Levine, MSN, RN, CNL; Arielle Niecestro, MSN, RN, CNL; Katherine Mc Ardle, MSN, RN, CNL; Hugh Vondracek, MSc, ΦΒΚ

**Background**
- Advanced Care Planning involves:
  - Education on life sustaining treatments
  - Sharing values/preferences with loved ones
  - Completion of advanced directives:
    - Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare
    - Living Will
- The presence of advanced directives:
  - Leads to end of life care more congruent with patient preferences and
  - Reduces unnecessary and unwanted medical interventions
- 67% of adults in the United States have not completed advanced directives
- Setting and Participants:
  - Patients on the Hematology/stem cell transplant in-patient unit at a large, Midwestern, Academic Medical Center

**Methods**

**Design**
Quality improvement project

**Instrument Development**
- Stakeholders (VP of Nursing, End-of-Life education and support coordinator, APN) identified heuristic principle violations and provided feedback on the ACP review flowsheet
- Investigators updated flowsheet based on stakeholder feedback

**Setting and Participants**
- Patients on the Hematology/stem cell transplant in-patient unit at a large, Midwestern, Academic Medical Center

**Measure**
ACP review flowsheet (4-items, nurse administered)

**Procedure**
- The student nurse invited in-patients to respond to the flowsheet
- For patients who indicated they wished to speak with a Chaplain about ACP the Chaplain on-call was contacted

**Results**
- 42 patients were invited; 28 (67%) were available and agreed to participate

**Advance Care Planning Review Flowsheet Findings (n=28)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient has power of attorney for healthcare</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, RN able to locate the document (n=5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient has ever written down thoughts about future medical treatment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient wishes to talk with someone about advanced care planning</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, patient desires a bedside consult with Chaplain on-call</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seconds to complete the advanced care planning flowsheet, M [range]</td>
<td>62.5 [11 – 210]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion & Conclusions**
- The flowsheet is a user-friendly tool to determine the status of a patient’s ACP
- The ACP review flowsheet is brief and does not impede workflow, typically completed in one minute
- Further testing/evaluation of the flowsheet with a larger sample in other patient care settings is required
- A standardized, evidence-based ACP flowsheet helps empower nurses and patients, promotes communication among providers, and builds the consistency necessary to provide optimal patient care

**Acknowledgements**: Dr. Olimpia Paun, Dr. Beth-Anne Christopher, and all the participant patients who participated in this quality improvement project.