

Palliative Performance Scale Differences between Patients Referred by Specialized Cancer Center and General Hospitals to the Palliative Care Center in Kuwait

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Abstract : Background: Palliative care is changing from just 'end of life care' to care delivered earlier in the disease course. Metanalysis showed that Palliative Performance Scale (PPS) is associated with increased length of survival. The Palliative Care Center (PCC) in Kuwait is the only stand-alone center in Eastern Mediterranean Region with a capacity of 92 beds. We compared clinical characteristics between patients referred from the Specialized Cancer Center and general hospitals in Kuwait to PCC. Method: A cross Sectional survey was conducted since the opening of PCC in January 2011 to June 2013. Patients' data on demographics, type of the cancer, PPS score and referring hospital were collected and analyzed. Results: Total number of the patients was 142. Mean age was 61.05 ± 14.79 years, 66 patients (47.1%) were males and 74 (52.9%) were females. The most common cancers in males were lung (n=18, 27.3%) followed by head and neck cancers (n=8, 12.1%) and brain tumors (n=7, 10.6%) while in females, the most common cancers were breast cancer (n=12, 16.7%) followed by ovarian cancer (n=10, 13.9%) and Cancer Colon (n=8, 11.1%). Patients with PPS score 30% were 27.9% (n=39), 40% in 40.7% (n=57), and 50% in 17.1% (n=24) respectively. Patients referred from the Specialized Cancer Center had significantly higher portion of patients with PPS score > 30% (73.4%, n=94), compared to patients coming from general hospitals (33.3%, n=4), P value= 0.007. Conclusion: There is significant difference in PPS scores between patients referred from the Specialized Cancer Center compared to patients referred from general hospitals. We encourage that all cancer patients should be treated in Specialized Cancer Centers and earlier involvement of Palliative Care Centers to achieve better survival. Training workshops are needed for health care professionals working in general hospitals to raise awareness about earlier referral of patients to palliative care services.

Keywords : palliative care, kuwait, performance scale differences, pps score, specialized hospitals

Conference Title : ICCNCC 2015 : International Conference on Cancer Nursing and Cancer Care

Conference Location : Bangkok, Thailand

Conference Dates : December 17-18, 2015