

Retrospective Analysis on the Efficacy of the SPICT tool and the Quality of Patient Communication in a Palliative Care Population.

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Abbreviated abstract: This study identified thirty-three individuals who died at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary. All patients had both their SPICT and NEWS score documented. 79% of individuals who died were SPICT positive on admission. 24% of patients had a NEWS score of 5 or more on admission. 75% families were updated regularly, 72% of patients and families did not have a discussion regarding goals of care. 15% of patients did not have a discussion regarding DNACPR in a suitably timely manner. 68% of patients and families were not advised about a possible risk of deterioration prior to the occurrence.

Related publications: (up to 2 references)

- D Sbiti-Rohr *et al*, BMJ Open 6 (9), (2016)
- A Woolfield *et al*, Journal of Palliative Medicine 22 (11) 1417-1424 (2019)

Previous work, challenge, and approach

- The SPICT (Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool) was developed to identify individuals who are likely to be in their last twelve months of life.
- While the SPICT tool is accepted within palliative care medicine, it is less commonly used by hospital clinicians.
- Identifying SPICT positive patients and discussing this topic requires effective communication between clinicians, patients and families.
- This study assessed the efficacy of the SPICT tool in comparison with the NEWS for identifying patients at risk of deterioration.
- Furthermore, it assessed the communication skills of the doctors during each patient's journey.

Techniques and Methods

- This study identified thirty-three individuals who died at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary.
- All patients had both their SPICT and NEWS score documented.
- Communication skills between clinicians, patients and their families were assessed, as well as measuring the effectiveness of the SPICT tool.
- These aspects were identified retrospectively by going through the notes of each patient.

Results and Conclusions

- 79% of individuals who died were SPICT positive on admission, while 24% of patients had a NEWS score of 5 or more on admission.
- A positive SPICT tool was therefore more accurate than a high NEWS score in recognising end of life patients.
- 75% families were updated regularly however 68% of patients and families were not advised about a possible risk of deterioration prior to the occurrence.
- 72% of patients and families did not have a discussion regarding goals of care.
- 15% of patients did not have a discussion regarding DNACPR in a suitably timely manner.
- It is therefore important to discuss management regarding goals of care as well as DNACPR in advance in order to support the patient and their families.