

NHPCO Project ECHO

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Case presentation by Hospice Manager at Horizon Home Care and Hospice, Milwaukee, WI

ECHO Session Facilitator

Aparna Gupta DNP, FACHE, CPHQ, CRNP

Vice President Quality, NHPCO



Disclosures

Disclosure

The planners and faculty disclose that they have no financial relationships with any commercial interest.

Data Collection

In order to support the growth of the ECHO® movement, Project ECHO® collects participation data for each ECHO® program. Data allows Project ECHO® to measure, analyze, and report on the movement's reach. Data is used in reports, on maps and visualizations, for research, for communications and surveys, for data quality assurance activities, and for decision-making related to new initiatives.

Evaluation

You will be receiving an email with a link to complete a short survey about this session. Please complete the survey within 48 hours. Completion of this evaluation is required for Quality Connections credit. We ask all participants to take the survey as it will help us to improve future clinic sessions.

Today's Agenda

- Welcome and brief introductions
- Introduction of the case presenter and subject matter experts
- Brief presentation about Palliative Care Network of Wisconsin (PCNOW)
- Case presenter presents case details and specific questions or ponderings.
- Questions and clarifications – participants
- Final thoughts - subject matter experts and participants

Ground Rules and Video Teleconferencing Etiquette

- This is an all share-all learn format; judging is not appropriate
- Respect one another – it is ok to disagree but please do so respectfully
- Participants - introduce yourself prior to speaking
- One person speaks at a time
- Disregard rank/status
- Remain on mute unless speaking and eliminate or reduce environmental distractions to improve sound/video quality
- Use video whenever possible; make eye contact with the camera when you are speaking
- **Do not disclose protected health information (PHI) or personally identifiable information (PII)**

Introductions

Session Presenter

Elena Sherr, MSW, APHSW, Hospice Manager at Horizon Home Care and Hospice, PCNOW Secretary, WI

Subject Matter Experts

- Faith Protsman, MD, HMDC, Regional Medical Director for California, Vitas Healthcare, CA
- Tomasina Chamberlain, MSN, MBA, RN, CHPCA, Director of Compliance, Delaware Hospice, DE
- Josh Bassarear, LCSW, ACHP-SW, Social Work and Bereavement Team Lead, Circle of Life, AR



Today's Case Themes

- Older caregivers and caregiver burnout
- Suicidality and risk factors for older adults
- Safety in the home setting
- Confidentiality and mandated reporting

Next Steps

Case presentation

Questions

- Subject Matter Experts & Participants

Recommendations

- Subject Matter Experts & Participants

Summary

Palliative Care Network of Wisconsin (PCNOW)

- PCNOW is a grassroots, not for profit, free membership organization started in October 2014. Also Home of the Fast Facts.
- Mission: To support the growth of palliative care services in Wisconsin through education, systems change, and advocacy.
- **Advance the care of Wisconsin patients and families** through the growth of generalist and specialist palliative care services in all health care settings.
- **Advance the knowledge and skills of all health professionals** providing care for seriously ill patients.
- **Advocate for improved palliative care services** through changes in health care policy, regulations and legislation.

Situation

- Social worker made initial visit to meet Susan, an 84 year old hospice patient with a hospice diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease. Patient's 93 year old spouse, George, and 2 adult children present. One son, Mike, approaches social worker and quietly states that there is something he must disclose but it cannot be shared with his father or sister. Mike hands social worker a suicide note written by George. In the note, George describes a plan to kill himself and Susan by leaving the car running and inhaling carbon monoxide. Included in the note are instructions for children to manage George's affairs and apology.
- The social worker takes a photo of the note. Just then, the hospice nurse arrives. The social worker quickly updates the nurse by writing a note on a pad of paper, indicating immediate danger and need to get patient transferred out of the home.
- The nurse and social worker speak with the George and his 2 children about inpatient placement for a 5 day respite. George is reluctant but agreeable. George's daughter, Tracy, is against patient leaving the home but is convinced by the team. Once patient is out of the home, Adult Protective Services is called.

Background

- George and Susan have been married for 52 years. George has been the primary caregiver for Susan for the last 8 years. He has watched Susan decline in condition and promised her, when she was well, that he would not let her suffer. George is a Veteran and his sister committed suicide when he was young.
- George's daughter, Tracy, is not on the hospice page and has unrealistic expectations about George's ability to care for Susan in the home. Son, Mike, is reasonable and appears genuinely concerned for Susan and George's safety. He is worried about the backlash from Tracy regarding inpatient placement and does not want her to know he disclosed George's plan to commit suicide to the hospice team.

Assessment

- Social worker assesses an immediate risk to patient's safety. There is also a concern for George's safety. The team is questioning whether George should be allowed to visit Susan in the inpatient unit. Also, the team expresses concerns about how to address what Mike has disclosed to George and Tracy and let them know that patient cannot return home at this time.
- Once Susan arrives at the in-patient unit, she tests positive for COVID-19.

Caregivers and Suicidality

- The rate of suicidal ideation in caregivers is at an all-time high (one estimate ranges from 2.7% to 71%) *
- Stress and the risk of adverse mental health outcomes in unpaid caregivers (for older adults) is profound**
- Unpaid caregivers have heightened thoughts of suicide***
- The risk of suicide greatly increases with old age, particularly among older men^

*O'Dwyer et al, 2021

**<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/11/numbers-stress-caregivers>

*** <https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/health/info-2020/coronavirus-increased-suicidal-ideations.html>

^Bruce & Pearson, 2022 (PROSPECT Trial)

Recommendations / Discussion

- Thoughts/recommendations
- What would you have done in this situation?
- Should George be allowed to visit?
- What should future follow-up with George look like?

You Too Can Present a Case!

- Could be in the hospice or palliative care space
- Quality focused
- Is relevant to today's hospice and palliative care environment
- What are we looking for in a patient-based case?
 - Poses difficult issues for the interdisciplinary team
 - May be an outlying or a frequent situation that involves clinical/ emotional/ psychosocial/ spiritual challenges
- What are we looking for in a process-based case?
 - May involve operational or clinical process issues
 - May affect patient care
 - Is a focus of quality improvement for the organization

Upcoming Project ECHO Sessions

Access our Project ECHO webpage
at <https://www.nhpco.org/projectecho/>

(On the page, scroll down to complete the case study SBAR form for submission case study for consideration)