

Palliative care: Knowledge and attitude among Saudi residents, 2016

Maream Alhobel¹, Ola Al-Drees², Ahmed Gasim Elzubair³



¹Ministry of National Guard Health Affairs, Al-Ahsa, Saudi Arabia,

²SBFM, ABFM, Saudi Arabia

³ University of Medical Sciences & Technology, Sudan

Abstract

Introduction: Palliative care is a medical specialty, which focuses on relieving the suffering and improving the quality of life for patients who are facing life-threatening illnesses and their families. Looking after dying patients is inseparable from our responsibility as physicians. However, dealing with the dying patients is challenging for the majority of physicians.

Aim: To document the knowledge and attitudes of palliative care among residents from major specialties, eastern province, Saudi Arabia.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study was carried out using a self-administered questionnaire to a convenient sample of residents from major specialties from various training centers in eastern province, Saudi Arabia, during 2015–2016. A total of 433 residents have been participated in the study.

Results: About 46% of the residents showed lack of overall palliative care knowledge and almost half of them had negative views toward palliative care. Almost 60% of them achieved good score in pain management. The majority of respondents had never received training in palliative medicine (91.7%). It was observed that higher training level has a positive effect on the overall knowledge, including basic concept, pain, and psychiatric symptoms management. Also, previous exposure to patients who would benefit from palliative care has a direct effect on overall knowledge and attitude scores.

Conclusion: The results indicate a low level of knowledge and attitude regarding palliative medicine among sampled residents. Also, it highlights the importance of exposing the residents to palliative medicine field to improve their knowledge and attitude.

Biography

Maream Alhobel currently working as an assistant consultant in the primary health care clinics in ministry of national guard health affairs NGHA, Al-Hassa, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. NGHA primary healthcare centers are working on providing the best precautionary and therapeutic services to the national guards and their dependents. It also serves as a training center for Saudi board family medicine residency program. She earned her medical degree from Imam Abdulrahman bin faisal university (Formerly known as University of Dammam) school of medicine, Dammam, KSA and completed a family medicine residency program in King Abdulaziz National Guard Hospital Al-Hassa, KSA. She also earned Arab board of family medicine. During her residency, she had an elective rotation in Palliative medicine at King Fahad Specialist Hospital in Dammam and she continues to pursue her interest in Palliative medicine and planning to choose palliative medicine as fellowship.

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