Defining, Evaluating and Articulating the Role of Social Work in Pediatric Palliative Care

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Disclosures

• The presenters have nothing to disclose
Objectives

• To define the scope of practice and unique role of PPC social workers
• To understand at least three challenges that PPC social workers face in establishing their seat at the table
• To name two strategies to communicate about and advocate for the need for PPC social workers within pediatric palliative and hospice care teams
Workshop Agenda

• Introductions
• Scope of practice for pediatric palliative care SW (PPCSW)
• Case discussion
• Challenges and strategies
• Wrap up
Social Work Core Values

- Service
- Social justice and advocacy
- Dignity and the worth of every person
- Relationships
- Integrity and honesty
- Competence
Why is defining the role of the PPCSW so challenging?

- Overlapping roles
- Multiple social workers/psychosocial providers
- Lack of clarity about skills
  - Varying skills/interests between practitioners
- Gaps in advocacy, education and leadership
- Need for systemic education about palliative care
- Unique hospital cultures/structures
- Time for clinical practice
Common Roles of the Social Worker

- Bio-psychosocial aspects of health/wellness
- Spiritual aspects of health/wellness
- Compassion, respect, autonomy, sensitivity, safety
- Family-systems
- Advocacy, resources
- Counseling
- Self-awareness
- Professional ethics/values
- Collaboration
- Staff support
Competencies of the PPCSW

- Assessment skills, including ability to assess for physical and existential pain, adequacy of care system, patient/environmental safety
- Ability to provide psychoeducation on grief, coping strategies, stress management skills, self-care, and developmental stages
- Facilitate life review
- Access and advocate for internal and external resources
- Discharge planning and case management skills
- Assist with funeral planning
- Self-care/staff support
- Advocacy/education/leadership in PPC
- Expansive knowledge across multiple settings of care and fields of practice
Overlapping Roles of Psychosocial Providers

- PPC Social Worker
- Nurse
- Chaplain
- Psychologist
- Child Life Specialist
- Unit/Specialty Social Worker
Enhanced Role of Pediatric Palliative Care Social Worker

- Psycho/Social/Spiritual Assessment
- Supportive Listening/Processing
- Psycho-Education
- Advance Care Planning
- Crisis Intervention & Counseling
- Anticipatory Guidance
- Team/Family Meetings
- Communication/Care Coordination
- Operationalize Plan of Care

- Expertise Across Continuum of Diverse Conditions/Disease Populations/Settings
- Patient/Family Advocacy
- Legacy/Memory/Meaning Making Activities
- Grief & Bereavement Support
- Funeral/Ritual Planning
- Staff Education
- Staff Support & Debriefing
- Ethical Considerations
- Symptom Management
Case Discussion Parts 1-2

• What is your assessment? Intervention/treatments recommendations?
• How do you plan to support Lydia? Brother? Mother? Father? The staff?
• What are the dynamics to consider regarding Lydia’s other psychosocial providers?
Case Discussion Parts 3-5

• How would you approach this situation?
• Who would you want present?
• Who would you engage? Who would you collaborate with? Who would you ask for help?
• How would you approach self-care and support for other providers?
What are the common challenges?
What are the potential strategies?
What are methods to improve the role of PPCSW in your hospital?

• Define the role based on local needs
• Clarify/educate about the role throughout the hospital
  – Psychosocial providers
  – Services with high rated of PPC utilization
• Create partnerships with leadership
• Relationships
• Communication
• Engage/Empower other clinicians
What’s your elevator speech?
Take Home Points

• Work with your PPC team to determine the PPCSW scope of practice/role
• Educate others about the unique competencies of the PPCSW
• Utilize relationships with other staff and leadership to build shared practices
• Advocacy
Thank you!

• Questions/Comments
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References


