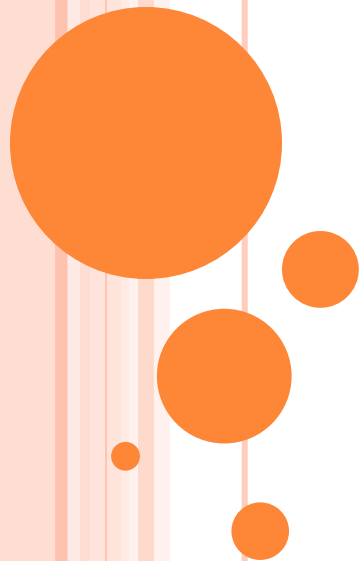


**EXPLAINING THE ROLE OF THE
PALLIATIVE CARE CLINICAL
NURSE SPECIALIST (CNS)
IN HOSPITAL TEAMS**

Alison Humphrey & Vanessa Spawton
Macmillan CNSs in Palliative Care



BACKGROUND

- **Palliative Care** – person centred approach to physical symptoms, psychological, social, spiritual distress and cultural needs in patients with life limiting conditions, to optimise quality of life for patients & their family or friends
- **Specialist** – expert level, by multi-professional team, to manage persisting, severe or complex problems
- **Teaching Hospital** – 1500 beds: A&E, renal, cardiology, oncology, haematology, Teenage Cancer Unit...
 - 30% of case load is End of Life Care



COMPLEXITY

- Nursing considered a complex activity (EANS, 2019)
- Nursing value is difficult to measure
- CNS role increasingly requires justification in terms of 'value for money' (Marples, et al 2011)



REASONS FOR RESEARCH

- To prove worth/value in the role of the CNS in Palliative Care
- To highlight benefit to hospital palliative care patients gained from contact with CNSs in Palliative Care



SEARCH STRATEGY

- 2 CNSs - with support of wider CNS team, researcher and research librarian
- 4 databases: Cinahl, Medline, Pubmed, Embase
- Searched on title & abstract using following terms
 - palliative care
 - terminal care
 - acute care
 - nurse specialists
 - clinical nurse specialists
 - advanced nursing practice



SEARCH STRATEGY CONTINUED...

- 123 articles selected, reduced to 26 articles following review of abstracts
- 26 articles reduced to 6 articles following review of whole article:
 - Box chart
- 6 articles chosen for full review
 - Critical Appraisal Skills Programme Tools



RESULTS

- **Jack et al (2002)** Stakeholders believe CNS adds benefit, particularly regards symptom control and psychological care. Acute setting.
- **Skilbeck and Payne (2003)** Researched the aspect of emotional care of CNS Role, but benefit to patients not documented. Acute, hospice and community settings.
- **Lloyd, Williams and Payne (2003)** Highlighted the importance of CNS dealing with depression, but identified training needs. Acute and community setting



RESULTS CONTINUED...

- **Hall et al (2013)** Value of CNS providing a seven day service. Acute setting.
- **George (2018)** How Advance Nurse Practitioner in palliative care role acts as co-ordinator of care. Variety of settings.
- **Coller and Blythe (2017)** Research proposal to investigate the importance of the palliative care CNS role. Acute and community setting.



KEY THEMES

- Nothing found in the literature that would help measure service in terms of worth
- Only certain aspects of the role highlighted by the research studies and not the CNS in Palliative Care role as a whole
- Complexity/Complex processes of the role not detailed
- Common theme 'co-ordinator' or 'keyworker'
- 50% of articles over 10 years old
- Gap in literature to support and justify CNS in Palliative Care contribution/role



NEXT STEPS...

- Share at local research network
- Introduce outcome measures
- Need for further research identified



Acknowledgements

Matt Cooper Outreach Librarian for Sheffield Teaching Hospitals,
Health Sciences Library, Sheffield

Sally Fowler Davis Clinical Academic Researcher, Clinical
Research Development Officer, Combined Community & Acute Care
Group, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals

**All CNS's in the Palliative Care Hospital Specialist Team at
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals**

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