For ACHE Face-to-Face Education Credits

Palliative Care-Advancing Quality and Improving Costs

Length: 1.5 hours

Target Audience: C-suite, vice presidents and directors; clinicians, and post-acute care professionals.

Description: Palliative care is among the least understood hospital service lines by patients as well as doctors, nurses and administrators. One main reason is that palliative care is designed to address the needs of the chronically ill not just the terminally ill. Palliative care aims to make patients comfortable through relief of pain and also help them with the acceptance of life’s natural processes. Healthcare delivery systems look to palliative care programs to help increase the quality of care provided while also driving down costs of care. As part of the continuum of care, the palliative care model incorporates a multidisciplinary team approach that includes health professionals and family members to focus on the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of patients. Palliative care encourages a radical shift from traditional delivery of prolonged, unnecessary medical treatment to providing patients with care centered on quality of life. This program will address palliative care and its impact on the quality and cost issues central to healthcare reform.

Faculty: Moderator and two to three panelists. The moderator should be a healthcare executive with experience developing and implementing a palliative care program in a hospital or health system.

The panel should be composed of a diverse group of individuals and could include administrators of palliative care programs, ethicists and/or clinicians with palliative care experience.

Topics for Discussion:

- Palliative care and its impact on and by healthcare reform.
- The elements and concepts of palliative care that can improve quality of life while reducing costs.
- The differences and similarities between palliative care and hospice care.
- Best uses of advanced directives and advanced care planning.
• Roles of physicians and interdisciplinary team members in a palliative care program.
• Providing a transition from inpatient to outpatient palliative care programs.
• Obstacles encountered in implementing a palliative care program.
• The effects and outcomes of a palliative care program on patient care and health professionals.
• Stakeholders and service lines essential to provide palliative care services.
• Future funding for a palliative care program

Questions for Discussion:

1. How do you or your organization define palliative care?
2. What is your organization’s current philosophy and approach to end of life care?
3. How do your physicians and nurses feel about palliative care for terminally ill patients?
4. Are there current discussions in your organization about the high cost of care near the end of life? Who is having these discussions?
5. What are the assessment tools used to determine the need of palliative care services?
6. Describe some specific outcomes on quality and cost realized from your palliative care approaches or programs?
7. What service expansions have been developed or expanded to support a palliative care program in your organization or your community?
8. Who are the key members of your palliative care team? Are any other professionals needed?
9. How has your organization implemented advanced directives and advanced care planning?
10. What are the key components of an advanced care planning system? Are they all included in your organization’s approach?
11. What resources have been used to design or implement palliative care services?
12. Describe some of the successes and failures of palliative care in your community
13. What changes could be instituted to provide better access to palliative care in and beyond the hospital?
14. Is the funding model for your palliative program sustainable? Where are the challenging areas?
15. What is the future of palliative care in your community?

Material for Distribution:


Dimensions of Long-Term Care Management: An Introduction (June 2012)
Chapter 6: Hospice, Palliative, and End-of-Life Care (page 81).
Frontiers/Transforming End-of-Life Care: Ethics, Transitions, and Decisions Near Death
Volume 27, Number 3 (spring 2011)
- Death as a Life Event: Better Palliative and End-of-Life Care
- Invictus: Increasing Patient Choice in Advanced Illness and End-of-Life Care

“End-of-Life Care: The Time for a Meaningful Discussion Is Now”
William D. Petasnick, FACHE, CEO, Froedtert Health, Milwaukee

Additional Resources:

- Center to Advance Palliative Care. www.capc.org
  - “America’s Care of Serious Illness: A State by State report Card on Access to Palliative Care in Our Nations’ Hospitals.” May 2011
- Family Caregiver’s Guide to Hospice and Palliative Care. www.nextstepincare.org/left_top_menu/Caregiver_Home/Hospice
- GetPalliativeCare.org. www.getpalliativecare.org