

Cancer Pain Education for Patients and the Public



Module V

Telephone Education
Informal Systems

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Application of Telephone Education to Pain Management



Providing General Pain Information

AHCPR guidelines

Community resource list

Referrals

Providing General Pain Information

Overcoming myths/misconceptions

◆ Listen for clues



Providing General Pain Information

“Coaching” to support assessment and communication

- ◆ Start with open-ended question - “Describe your pain”
- ◆ Proceed to specific questions - “When did it start?”

Providing General Pain Information

Titration of pharmacologic interventions

- ◆ Following current prescription order
- ◆ Standing orders
- ◆ Multiple incremental changes

Providing General Pain Information

Management of side effects

- ◆ Constipation
 - bowel protocol
- ◆ Sedation
- ◆ Confusion
- ◆ Dizziness
- ◆ Rash

Benefits of Telephone Education

- ◆ More immediate response
- ◆ Less threatening than medical environment
- ◆ Anonymity and confidentiality
- ◆ Convenience
- ◆ Cost effective
- ◆ Reinforcement of previous education

Forms of Telephone Education

- ◆ Individual phone call for education triage
 - Pre-recorded
 - Individualized

Forms of Telephone Education

- ◆ Group education or teleconferencing for pain information and support

Common Practice Errors

Common Practice Errors

Asking leading questions

- ◆ Leading questions contain the answer
- ◆ Require simple yes or no answer
- ◆ Fosters authoritarian attitude
- ◆ Discourages collaboration

Common Practice Errors

Solution:

- ◆ Use open ended question
- ◆ Proceed to more specific question
- ◆ Ask question to quantify information
- ◆ Ask one question at a time



Common Practice Errors

Using medical jargon

- ◆ Communication requires exchange of information
- ◆ Solution:
 - Stick to lay terms
 - Aim for 5th to 8th grade comprehension

Common Practice Errors

Collecting inadequate data

- ◆ Real problem may be hidden
- ◆ Solution:
 - Allow adequate time
 - Utilize telephone communication form

Common Practice Errors

Stereotyping callers or problems

- ◆ Inadequate talk time
- ◆ Failure to remain open to new or discrepant information
- ◆ Solution:
 - Slow down
 - Be aware of “burnout”

Common Practice Errors

Failure to talk directly to patient

- ◆ Telephone advisor already at disadvantage;
can't see patient
- ◆ Need to minimize confusion
- ◆ Aphasic/hearing impaired patients
- ◆ Solution:
 - If possible talk to patient
 - Identify primary caregiver

Common Practice Errors

Accepting caller's self-diagnosis

◆ Solution:

- Make your own assessment

Common Practice Errors

Second guessing caller

- ◆ Power struggle

- ◆ Solution:

- Defuse
- Educate
- Compromise
- Evaluate - VNA visit, office visit, ER

Common Practice Errors

Devaluing reassurance calls

- ◆ Call “to check” information
- ◆ Testing the system
- ◆ Calls influence compliance/adherence
- ◆ Calls influence public relations

Common Practice Errors

Devaluing reassurance calls

◆ Solution:

- Learn to distinguish between need for hand holding and the need to be seen.
- Increasingly frequent calls may signal need to be seen.

Common Practice Errors

Delay in returning calls

◆ Policy possibilities

- 24 hour help
- before end of business day
- offering alternative options

Documentation

Chart contact time

Documentation

Be specific

- ◆ “Confused” - unable to identify caregiver
- ◆ “Unclear about medication” - unable to name medication



Documentation

Use quotes

- ◆ “He is afraid morphine will kill him”

Documentation

Records

- ◆ Patient record
- ◆ Department record
- ◆ Personal record



Documentation

Example: Documentation form

Tips for Effective Pain Education by Telephone

- ◆ Be aware of multi-dimensional nature of cancer pain
- ◆ Be alert to issues of acute, chronic, and progressive pain
- ◆ Use “Content of Pain Education” module as resource

Tips for Effective Pain Education by Telephone

- ◆ Reinforce telephone education with written information
 - Pain: A Clinical Manual handouts
- ◆ Evaluate telephone education