

Assessment of Knowledge of Palliative Care Amongst Medical Students and Interns in Medical College in Andhra Pradesh, India - A Cross Sectional Study

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Abstract:

The World Health Organization defines palliative care as an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems including the physical, psychosocial and spiritual dimensions. The current cross sectional study was done with the aim to assess the knowledge of Palliative medicine in 100 medical students / Interns in Andhra Pradesh, India. The data was collected using a validated pre-designed and pre-tested semi structured, Palliative care knowledge questionnaire PCKQ-B questionnaire. The study showed that 68% of them agreed that palliative care should start at the time of diagnosis of a life-threatening illness. 80% of them recognized that pain is a vital sign, 81 % agreed that severity of pain determines method of pain treatment. 65% of them said that Use of placebos is appropriate in some types of pain. Only 51 % of them agreed that a patient on morphine does not need NSAIDs, 28% said they do not know. 58% said morphine causes addiction in terminally ill patients. 17 % said that morphine may cause death in terminal patients. 23% said morphine causes vomiting and nausea. Only 17% said Oxygen supplementation may help in last difficult breaths. 93% said that Prognosis should always be clearly communicated. 57% said that resuscitation must always be performed if a patient is crashing irrespective of advanced metastatic cancer. 63% said that Patients and relatives both should always be involved in 'Do Not Attempt Resuscitation' decision making.