

Positive Contact in Palliative Care?

Pilot Study: Efficacy of Person-Centred Complementary Therapies in Improving the Quality of Life of Care Home Service Users

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Background: Following evaluation of our Care@Home Project, it was noted that no referrals had been received for Care Home Service Users (CHSU). In light of current research regarding end of life care in care homes¹, two local care homes agreed to be part of our pilot study.

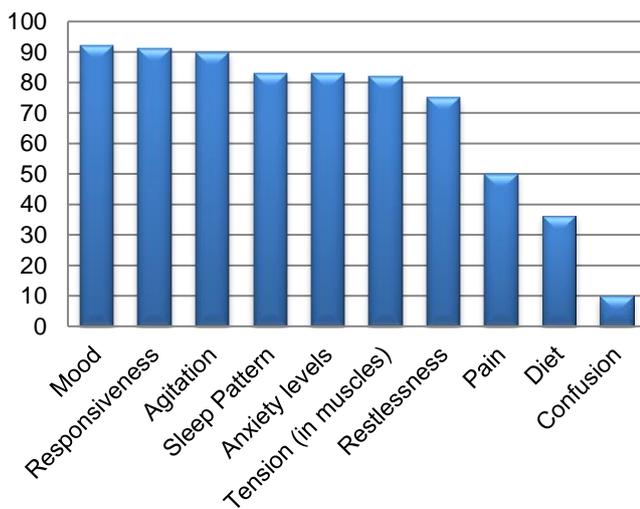
Aims: To identify if an existing service in patients' homes could be transferred to a care home setting. Measuring impact of complementary therapy on palliative care CHSU displaying physical and/or psychological symptoms of their life-limiting, progressive illness.

Methodology: A prospective pilot study of Complementary Therapy provision, utilising snowball sampling of CHSU (n=8) in collaboration with care home staff, using a mix of assessment tools^{2,3,4} to capture and measure pre/post therapy data.

RESULTS

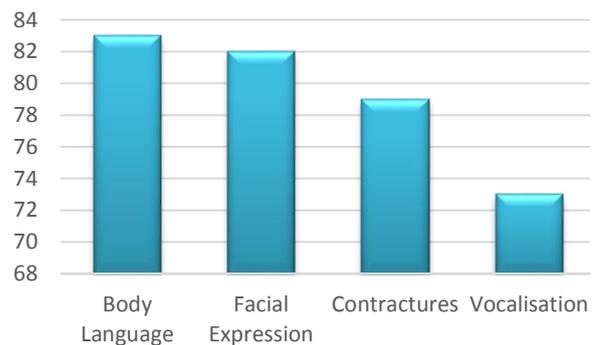
Feedback from evaluation forms, completed by Care Home staff and family members

Positive Change



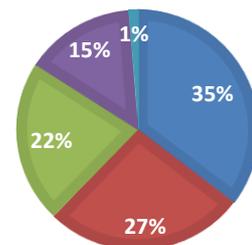
Data captured by Care@Home Specialist Nurse and Complementary Therapist using Assessment Tools^{2,3,4}

Abbey Pain Score - Positive Change



DisDAT RESULTS

- Distress → no distress
- No sign pre/post therapy distress
- Distress → reduced distress
- No change to distress
- No distress → sign of distress



Staff/Family Quotes

"It was less stressful for (CHSU) when care team were assisting with positional changes and personal care."

"Visibly more relaxed (after Complementary Therapy)."

"More focussed, relaxed, less anxiety, able to listen and concentrate."

Conclusions: The authors conclude that it would be beneficial to continue providing Complementary Therapies to CHSU. The use of the IPOS assessment tool proved ineffective for this population. Further funding would allow continuation, as well as study expansion/further research.

(1) Kupeli, N., Leavey, G., Harrington, J. et al. (2016) What are the barriers to care integration for those at the advanced stages of dementia living in care homes in the UK? Health care professional perspective. *Dementia - International Journal of Social Research and Practice*. Vol 10 pp 1177.

(2) Regnard, C., Mathews, D., Gibson, L. et al (2008) Disability Distress Assessment Tool (DisDAT) © 2008 Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Trust and St. Oswald's Hospice. Available at www.disdat.co.uk

(3) Abbey, J., De Bellis, A., Piller, N., et al. The Abbey Pain Scale. JH & JD Gunn Medical Research Foundation. Available at <http://www.racgp.org.au/your-practice/guidelines/silverbook/tools/abbey-pain-scale/>

(4) Cicely Saunders Institute (2014) Development of new integrated palliative care outcome score. Available at www.pos-pal.org