

Serious Illness as Seen through Visual Art in the Palliative Care Setting

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Statement of the Problem

The primary focus in treating serious illness is medical management. Early palliative care integration has been found to improve quality of life for both patient and family. In the palliative care setting, visual art has been shown as an effective means of expression, to help individuals gain capacity and feelings of self-worth during times of helplessness.

Findings

- 80 participants viewed the video and completed the survey.
- The majority were between 31-45 years old, female, Caucasian, and nurses.
- Qualitative analysis revealed 7 themes; samples of illustrative quotes are seen with each theme.

Methods

- A 10-minute narrated video about serious illness was developed.
- A link [Serious Illness visual art PP Final Version.pptx](#) was emailed to nurses and ancillary staff employed in HonorHealth Deer Valley Medical Center.
- Post video, participants completed a demographic survey and four open-ended thought questions.

Implications

- Using visual arts in the PC setting has shown to heighten awareness adding a different perspective in understanding serious illness.
- It is impactful in evoking an emotional response for a more empathetic feeling towards those who are suffering.

Background

A literature review documented increasing evidence about the benefits of visual arts' therapies in decreasing symptom burden, improving quality of life, and providing support to healthcare providers.

Purpose and Objectives

- To increase awareness about the experience of those suffering with serious illness.
- To educate others about the role visual art can play to evoke emotion and empathy in the palliative care setting.



Limitations

- Technological challenges with video and sound
- Material misinterpretation. Some were focused on pictures and not the narration

Acknowledgements/References

Mentor: Amos Bailey, MD, FACP, FAAHPM

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