



Neuropalliative Care: An Educational Presentation for Clinicians



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Statement of the Problem

- Early palliative care (PC) improves quality of life, symptom management, and survival for patients with serious illness.¹
- Only a small fraction of eligible patients receives PC.
- Neurologists often lack PC training and are hesitant to discuss it with patients.²

Background/Literature Review

- Literature search was conducted using keywords related to neuropalliative care including multiple search engines focusing on articles published primarily within the last 10 years.
- Position statement from the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) served as a foundation recognizing the importance of increased education and training for neurologists and other interdisciplinary health care professionals on the principles and practices of neuropalliative care.³

Purpose/Aims

This project's purpose is to increase community health care professionals' understanding and awareness of neuropalliative care.

Aims:

1. To develop and deliver an educational program on neuropalliative care to providers and interdisciplinary health care professionals.
2. To assess the educational program's effectiveness by surveying attendees' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about neuropalliative care and its benefits.

Methods

Setting: St. Mary's Medical Center, Grand Junction
Sample: Targeted community physicians, providers, and interdisciplinary health care professionals
Project Design: 50-minute educational neuroscience symposium presentation

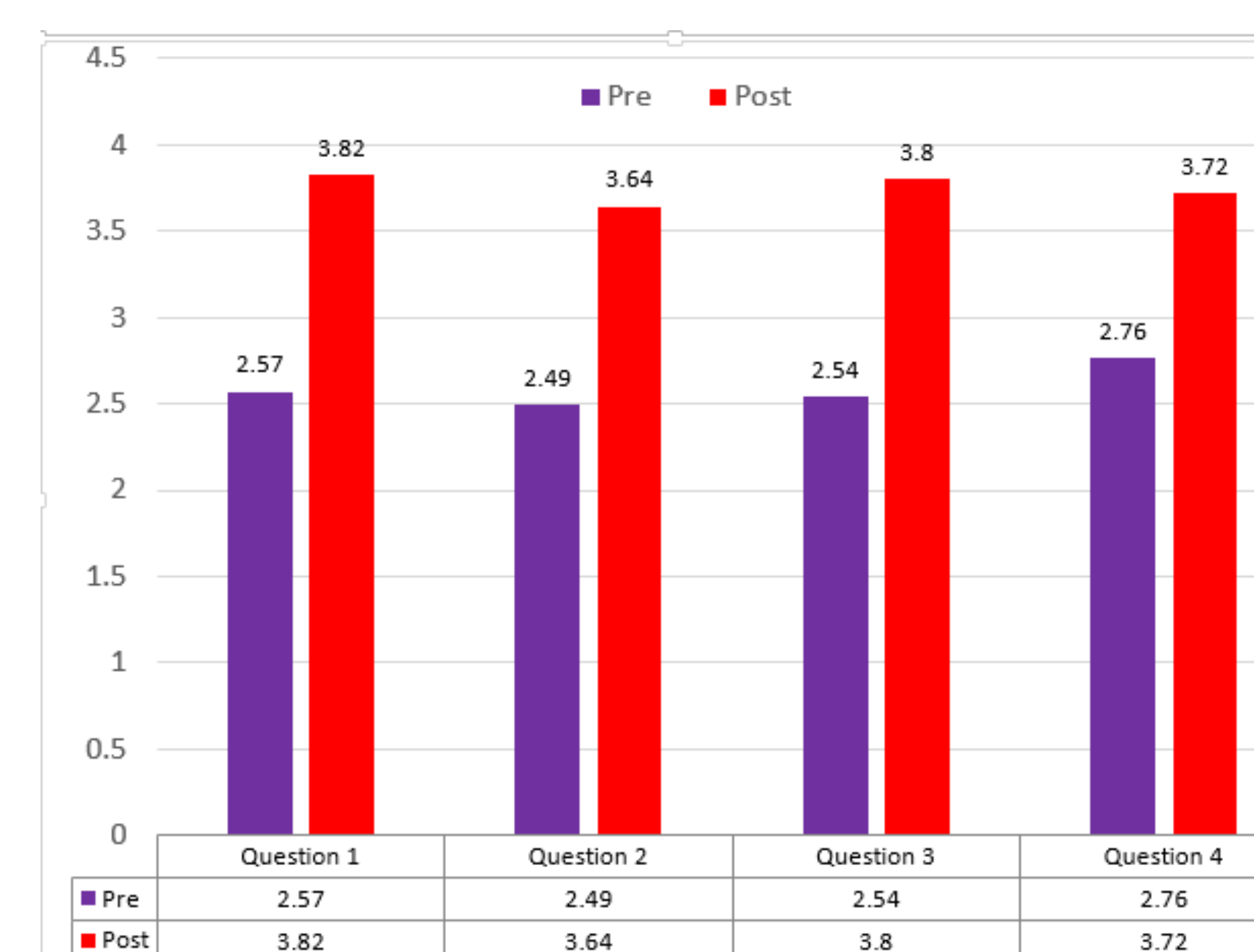
- Focus on the prevalence of neurological disorders in rural Western Colorado
- Present a case study demonstrating the importance and need of establishing a comprehensive neuropalliative care program

Evaluation: A 6-item survey was administered post intervention to determine improvement in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs about PC and comfort addressing the topic with patients/family caregivers. Data analyzed using descriptive statistics.
Timeline: Summer 2023

	Looking Back, How Did You Feel Before the Educational Session				How Do You Feel After the Educational Session			
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1. I understand the importance of neuropalliative care team does and how they can help my patients and me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I feel confident identifying patients who would benefit from neuropalliative care services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I have a better understanding of how palliative care differs from hospice and how neuropalliative care builds upon the foundation of palliative care to help patients with serious neurological illness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I am likely to refer (or help with a referral) to palliative care for patients with serious neurological illness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The overall quality of this educational presentation was high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I learned something I can apply to my practice. What did you learn that you can apply to your practice setting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Findings

- Forty health care professionals attended the presentation
- 100% completed the survey
- Survey results suggest that the program was successful in edifying attendees' knowledge of neuropalliative care and increased their confidence and likelihood in identifying and referring patients who might benefit from neuropalliative care



Conclusion

- This educational intervention is an important first step in increasing understanding and awareness of neuropalliative care among community healthcare professionals and improving the likelihood of patients with neurodegenerative disease serious illness to receive palliative care.
- **Future directions:** to develop a neuropalliative care service to improve the lives of people with neurodegenerative disease in Western Colorado.

Limitations

- This is a community-based program with a small sample of participants surveyed.

Acknowledgements/References

Mentor: Regina M. Fink, PhD, APRN

References:

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2. Taylor BL, Riordan DL, Pantilat SZ, Creutzfeldt CJ. Inpatients with neurologic disease referred for palliative care consultation. *Neurology.* 2019; 92(17):e1975-e1981.
3. Taylor LP, Besbris JM, Graf WD, Rubin MA, Cruz-Flores S, Epstein LS. On behalf of the Ethics, Law, and Humanities Committee, a joint committee of the American Academy of Neurology, American Neurological Association, and Child Neurology Society *Neurology.* 2022;98(10):409-416.