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A novel use of peer coaching to teach primary palliative care skills: Coaching consultation

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Peer coaching for primary palliative care skills

Introduction

Already busy inpatient palliative care teams face a growing population of aging adults and acute workforce shortages.(1) This staffing mismatch has resulted in an increased focus on training the workforce in primary palliative care, generalist palliative care that can be provided by all clinicians.(2) We seek to support and build the primary palliative care skills of frontline clinicians through peer coaching.

Peer coaching is a type of coaching in which peers voluntarily engage in a non-evaluative and mutually beneficial relationship that focuses on the participant's strengths and involves self evaluation and feedback to build capacity and improve task performance. (3) Peers may or may not have a similar level of knowledge.(4) In this pilot, the peer group is health professionals, which includes clinicians with different training such as palliative care physicians, internal medicine residents, and hospital medicine physicians, nurse practioners, and physician assistants.

Peer coaching enables learners to effectively and efficiently integrate skills into practice and was first developed for teacher education. (5) In educational studies comparing coaching with well designed workshops, rates of skill adoption for teachers were only 20% after the workshop, even with practice, demonstration, and personal feedback. When coaching was added (a colleague watching in the classroom and providing feedback), skill adoption rates rose past 90%. (6)(7)(8) In medicine, peer coaching programs are increasing in number and popularity(4), and have been shown to encourage reflection and learning(9)(10), increase provider knowledge(11), and promote transfer of knowledge to the clinical environment. (12) To our knowledge, the use of peer coaching to teach inpatient primary palliative care skills has not been described.

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