

Section: SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

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Knowledge of palliative care among professionals at a long-term care facility: a cross-sectional study

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INTRODUCTION: Palliative care has been progressively incorporated into healthcare practices, particularly because of population aging and the increase in chronic noncommunicable diseases. Many healthcare professionals, however, still have difficulty understanding and applying this model of care. **METHOD:** This descriptive cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted at a long-term care facility for older adults in Santo André, São Paulo. The sample comprised 42 members of the multiprofessional staff. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with 13 closed Likert-scale questions addressing general knowledge of palliative care, patient eligibility, and clinical management. **RESULTS:** Most participants worked as nursing assistants, caregivers, or kitchen staff. Overall, 71.5% disagreed that only patients with terminal illness should receive palliative care. In addition, 85% did not identify religion as a factor preventing acceptance of this approach, and 80% did not identify profession as a barrier. Conversely, 37.5% stated that only physicians could indicate palliative care, demonstrating limited understanding of the shared decision-making model. Responses also varied regarding resuscitation maneuvers in cases of cardiac arrest. **DISCUSSION:** The findings suggest that although professionals are receptive to palliative principles, important gaps in theoretical and practical knowledge remain. Believing that only physicians can initiate palliative care overlooks the importance of active listening and participation by the team and family in decisions. Uncertainty about resuscitation may also demonstrate the absence of well-established protocols or limited knowledge of advance directives. **CONCLUSION:** Although professionals have receptive attitudes toward palliative care, weaknesses persist that may compromise care. Continuous multiprofessional training programs are essential so that palliative care can be applied safely and ethically, promoting humanized and dignified care at every stage of life.

KEYWORDS: Palliative care; Healthcare team; Housing for older adults.