

Development of a Multidisciplinary Pediatric Palliative Care Program in Mbeya Tanzania

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Introduction:

- A multi-disciplinary palliative care program was established in March 2014 at an outpatient pediatric HIV clinic in Mbeya, Tanzania to support children and adolescents with life-threatening illnesses.
- This abstract aims to describe the patient characteristics and clinical outcomes of patients enrolled into the palliative care program at the Baylor Centre of Excellence in Mbeya, Tanzania

Methodology:

- Retrospective chart review was conducted to describe characteristics and outcomes of patients enrolled in palliative care between 1 March 2014 and 31 Dec 2016.
- Palliative services included consultation with a dedicated palliative care nurse, pain management, and memory/wish making activities.

Photos of Palliative Care Success Stories:



Proudly showing off a "memory making" photograph!



New clothes through the wish making program



Putting on a fashion show with a new dress received from the 'wish making' program



A home visit providing care and support in the comfort of their own home

Results:

Palliative Care Patient Characteristics:

- 99 patients were enrolled with a median age of 13 years (Range: 6 months-20 years).
- 69% were adolescents (ages 10-19 years).
- 84% were HIV positive with median CD4 of 92 cells/mm³ (range: 0-1360).
- Common conditions in HIV positive patients included Kaposi sarcoma (35%), end organ dysfunction (10%), chronic lung disease (5%), stroke (5%), extra-pulmonary TB (5%) and other (40%).
- Common conditions in HIV negative patients included cerebral palsy (38%), acute myeloid leukemia (13%), Kaposi sarcoma (13%), extra-pulmonary TB (13%) and other (23%).
- 69% of all patients had severe acute malnutrition.

Palliative Care Patient Outcomes:

- Of all patients, 29% died, 7% were lost to follow up, 5% transferred care and 58% survived despite their life threatening conditions.
- Of those who died (n=29), 83% were adolescents.
- 24% of patients reported pain and received effective analgesia.
- 56% completed memory/wish making activities.

Conclusions:

- Despite resource limitations, a multidisciplinary approach to palliative care can be successfully implemented for HIV positive and negative children and adolescents.
- Patients with HIV still present with advanced disease and need palliative care.
- In this cohort, the majority of patients were adolescents, a vulnerable population with specific palliative care needs