

The Greek Home Palliative Care Unit "Galilea" The Story So Far

E. Patiraki, E Petta, A. Paradooulou, J. Liakopoulos, A. Papapetrou, D. Manoli, A. Tsatsouli
Palliative Home Care Unit "Galilea" Holy Metropolis of Mesogala and Lavriotiki, Athens, Greece

Objectives: Presentation of the characteristics of cancer patients treated by "Galilea", the first multidisciplinary home palliative care team in Greece.

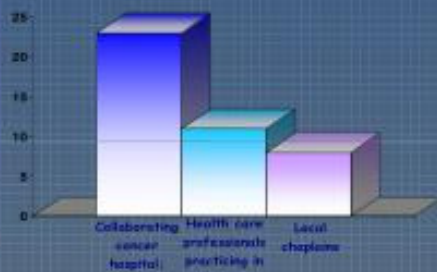
Methods: Retrospective data from patients' files collected from March 2010 to January 2011. The multidisciplinary team consisted of one physician, three nurses, one social worker and one chaplain. Services were provided at no charge, during working hours. A 24hour emergency line was also available.

Results

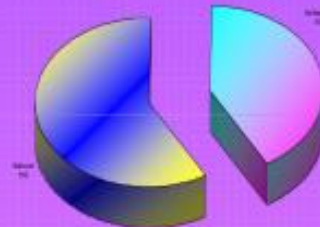
Demographic Data

Sex	Frequency N=42	Percentage (%)
Female	26	61.9
Male	16	38.1
Age (mean ± SD) (range) (years)	65 (28 - 87)	

Patients' Recruitment



Patients' Performance Status



Patients' Type of Therapy



Only 3 patients left the palliative home care program and the remaining 39 patients were followed for a period of 1 up to 47 weeks. Almost half of them (48%) were treated for 8 weeks and just 6% exceeded 5 months duration.



There were over 400 visits at home so far, by one or more team members. Up to now, 20 patients have died, 60% at home. Only 7/12 have been hospitalized during the time of follow up.

Conclusions: Providing home palliative care to cancer patients, by a multidisciplinary team is feasible, even without the community health care infrastructure available in other countries.

DEVELOPING "GALILEE"

A HOME PALLIATIVE CARE UNIT FOR CANCER PATIENTS IN GREECE

Tserkezoglou, E.Patiraki, E.Charalampidou, I.Christopoulou, M.Strigou, V.Akarepi, D.Mosoiu

Galilee Palliative Home Care Unit, Holy Metropolis of Mesogaia and Lavriotiki,

Athens, Greece

AIM

To present the strategic plan of the development of a home palliative care unit for cancer patients in Greece

METHODS

A steering working group was formulated chaired by the Metropolitan of Mesogaia and Lavreotiki (Orthodox Church Greece) including health care professionals, legal advisors, administrators, informatics, specialists and businessman

Areas of concern were:

- multidisciplinary education of health care professionals and volunteers
- contacting palliative care experts from abroad to ensure training and mentorship
- solving legal issues,
- collaborating with a cancer hospital for inpatient care of patients,
- developing informatics to achieve continuity of care
- search for funding

RESULTS

- During the two year preparatory phase, seminars by experts on palliative care were organized. Tutors from Casa Sperantei Hospice in Brasov (Romania) supervised and conducted the training program.
- The core team consisting of a general practitioner, three nurses and two social workers were further trained in the collaborative cancer hospital.
- A contract was then signed between the hospital board of directors and the Metropolitan.
- The hospital authorities promoted the program to its population of patients and provided inpatient care as needed.
- The Ministry of Health granted a license to practice home care, upon request.
- The church hosted and funded the team.
- Electronic files are being developed and there are plans to exchange information soon.
- Continuing education is also provided.

CONCLUSIONS

"Galilee" is the first multidisciplinary palliative care unit that provides care to adult cancer patients at home, without charge, in a large suburban area of Athens, since March 2010