

Psychosocial Support During COVID-19 Training Video Series

Video One: The Palliative Journey

Key Messages

When supporting individuals during their palliative and end of life journey, service providers are reminded to go back to the basics of supportive psychosocial care:

1. Build Rapport - Be respectfully curious, ask questions, get to know the person you are caring for
2. Be an Active Listener
3. Be Comfortable with Silence, and Use Silence
4. Allow for Space to Process/Pause to allow someone to experience and express tearfulness or distress
5. Use Reflection – Paraphrase and reflect back
6. Integrate Use of Self – Be authentic
7. Stay Grounded – Be sure to care for yourself in order to be fully present for your patient
8. Meet your client where they are at (ask the patient what their primary concerns are and planning your interventions accordingly is essential to quality psychosocial care)

Consider the 5 Senses When Supporting the Dying:

1. Sound – use music, audiobooks, singing, guided meditations with voice
2. Sight – consider moving the bed to face a window, use visual meditations, play the tv or movie
3. Touch – provide a textured blanket or pillow, a stuff animal to cuddle, touch through PPE if appropriate
4. Taste – provide favourite foods or drinks (check in with the medical team for guidance as to whether this is appropriate and safe)
5. Smell – open window for fresh air, fresh flowers, scented candle, smell of food cooking in the home (check with the medical team for guidance as to whether this is appropriate and safe)

Comforting and Supporting the Dying from a Distance:

- Leveraging the use of technology
 - Phone or Video call spread out throughout the day
 - Move your phone call to video calls

- Read or sing to the person. Reminisce and share stories. Have a virtual dinner party or Netflix party.
 - Send an E-Card virtually
- Prepare and Provide a Comfort Care Kit - Whether it is big fuzzy socks, photos, books/magazines, ipod with a favourite playlist, items from their home, a cherished item, a comfort item, cards and letters, or anything else that might bring some comfort and entertainment.
- Send cards, letters and photographs that can be displayed in the patient's immediate environment (this is also a good way for children to participate and feel connected ie. Colouring a picture or making a card).
- Make and send a Fabric Hug or a Prayer Shawl
- Do Handprint or Fingerprint Art as a legacy gift
- Purchase and Gift a Recordable Voice Books
- Visit at a safe distance – through the window, making window signs, “comfort caroling”
- Create an “ethical will” for the person