S.C.A.L.E.
Spiritual Care at Life’s End:
A Multi-disciplinary Approach to End-of-Life Issues in a Hospital Setting

By Sally Harvey, MLS, AHIP
Overview of Environment
Thunderbird Samaritan Medical Center

- 294 Bed Community Hospital – soon to be 340
Located in Phoenix metropolitan area, near the Sun Cities
Overview of Environment
Thunderbird Samaritan Medical Center

- 294 Bed Community Hospital – soon to be 340
- Emphasis on Cardiology Services, Oncology Services, ICU/CCU, Maternity and Med/Surg
- Located near 3 major retirement communities
- Part of Banner Health System
Rationale for Project

- Opportunities to provide excellent end-of-life care missed due to lack of communication among staff
- Press-Ganey Inpatient Satisfaction scores regarding emotional and spiritual needs were inconsistent
- Pastoral Care services available only during regular business hours
Clarification of Goals

- Grant-funded project targeted specifically to cancer patients
- Inter-disciplinary team hand-picked by project initiators
- “Visioning” session held with inter-disciplinary team
- Mission Statement developed to guide project
The Spiritual Care at Life’s End Team (S.C.A.L.E.) is dedicated to advancing holistic, quality end of life care by serving as an educational resource and advocate for patients, families and staff.
Specific goals identified by team

- Improve Spiritual & End-of-life care for in-patients at TSMC
- Implement educational program for training of staff
- Improve Press-Ganey Inpatient Satisfaction scores
- Improve S.C.A.L.E. team/Pastoral Care response time for referrals
- Increase number of direct patient/family contact sessions with S.C.A.L.E. team/Pastoral Care
- Increase Hospice referrals
Needs Assessment

- For improved outcomes measurement, needs assessment conducted prior to implementation of project
- Survey sent to the following groups:
  - Physicians – 100
  - Nurses – 500
  - Chaplains – 13
  - Social Workers – 12
- 22% response rate
- Survey will be repeated post-implementation
Sample Questions from Survey

- I am comfortable raising the option of Hospice to patients
- I value pastoral care interventions with patients
- I routinely address preferences regarding resuscitation with patients
- I often inquire with patients if they want a chaplain to visit
Pre-implementation Needs Assessment Results

- Overall scores were higher on attitudinal questions than on procedural

- Disparity between physicians and nurses regarding orders for palliative care

- Physicians had higher rate of return than nurses!
Staff Training Curriculum Development

- Sub-team created to develop curriculum
- Training targeted for all staff in hospital
- Goals of training:
  - Staff will gain insight into their own attitudes toward death
  - Staff will learn to implement the principles of a good death
  - Staff will feel empowered to act on these principles
  - Staff will become advocates for the principles throughout the medical center
Implementation

- Grant-funded, second shift chaplain hired with primary responsibility for this project
- Staff training schedule set for 2001
- Develop inter-disciplinary S.C.A.L.E. team composed of trained staff from every major nursing unit
- Create brochure, promotional materials, and provide educational materials to patients and families
Evaluation of Project

- Post implementation staff survey
- Tracking of pre and post implementation Press-Ganey Inpatient Satisfaction results
- Training session evaluation forms
- Number of contacts made by team with patients/families
- Number of hospice referrals
Role of Librarian in Project

- Chair of curriculum development sub-team for staff training program
- Evaluate, select and provide venue for distribution of educational materials for patients and families
- Serve as member of multi-disciplinary team
- Assist with grant searching for continued funding
In Summary

- End-of-life issues are often not adequately addressed in healthcare professional’s education
- People and society in general are uncomfortable with the topic of death
- Educational efforts are underway at TSMC to address these issues
- Ultimate goal is establishing a standard of excellence in end-of-life care
Questions?

- Contact: Sally Harvey, Librarian
  sally.harvey@bannerhealth.com
  602-588-5863