

SCOPE OF COMPLEMENTARY THERAPY ASSESSMENTS/QUALIFICATIONS

PURPOSE

To provide assessment guidelines for the use of complementary therapies that could benefit patients and caregivers in coping effectively with physiological and emotional symptoms related to stress responses in the dying process.

POLICY

Patients referred for complementary therapy services will have a complementary therapy evaluation completed by a qualified clinician who has additional certification or licensure in specified complementary therapy modalities. Complementary therapies that may be provided include adapted light Swedish Massage, comfort massage, Hand or Foot Reflexology, Healing Touch, Reiki, aromatherapy and music. Patients or caregivers who experience stress related symptoms may be referred to the Complementary Therapy clinician for consultation and evaluation.

PROCEDURE

1. Any members of the interdisciplinary group may refer a patient for evaluation of the need for complementary therapy services.
2. The complementary therapy clinician coordinates the evaluation with the hospice team, patient and family.
3. Assessments of the patients for complementary therapy services may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - A. Patient diagnosis, past medical history, current symptom presentation, medication regimen and allergies
 - B. Factors that may contribute to the current level of stress, physical discomfort and ineffective coping
 - C. Familiarity and past use of complementary therapies prior to illness
 - D. Evaluations of patient and/or caregiver comfort with touch and preferences for available therapies.
 - E. Assessment of which complementary therapy modality will offer relief for specific symptom presentation.

4. Complementary therapy assessments and reassessments may include as indicated, but will not be limited to:
 - A. Education on the uses of complementary therapies that alter fight or flight response, on the therapies themselves, and on the benefits of specific complementary therapies to patients and caregivers in the hospice setting.
 - B. Education regarding the use of complementary therapy in advanced disease and the dying process versus health.
 - C. Provision of complementary therapy session of patient/caregiver choice
 - D. Evaluation of the benefit and goals for complementary therapy as disease progresses and death becomes imminent.
5. Utilization of complementary therapy services in incorporated in the Plan of Care. A physician's order for 'Comfort massage/complementary therapy modality of patient/family choice prn' and a visit pattern is established with the RN Case Manager and the patient/family.
6. Changes in the plan of care will be documented and communicated to the physician and the hospice interdisciplinary team.