

Penn Medicine
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Program includes – Inpatient, Outpatient, Affiliated Hospice and Home Health Agency

Current COVID Status – Contingency preparation for the surge that is just beginning

Preparation to COVID 19

- Part of system's COVID response
- Working with Scott Halpern, MD from University of Pennsylvania PAIR Center to develop system response to critical care resource triage and DNR policies

Community Planning

- Penn home hospice taking COVID+ patients
- Inpatient hospice – not taking COVID+ patients from hospital, but will from community
- Many SNFs are closed so palliative care working with Penn-affiliated nursing homes to do telemedicine consults with the residents that focus on ACP

Role of Palliative Care

- Providing proactive ACP to non-COVID patients who do not want to go to the ICU
- Working with primary clinicians in adapting CAPC, VitalTalk, and Decision Making Aids from Colorado to help them do their work without needing to call because they are too busy
- Supporting palliative care delivery by non-specialists and using machine learning algorithm to identify high-risk patients with COVID who would benefit from palliative care

Clinical Role

Advance Care Planning

Reaching out to existing palliative care patients to do ACP

- Assisting with patients who do not want to go to the ICU
 - Using Palliative Care Risk Score for realistic conversations

Clinical Partners

Half the team is remote and half the team onsite

- Onsite presence as requested by institution, practicing social distance, since palliative care viewed as an essential service
- Daily rounds to divide the work and consider which person and which discipline is most useful in each situation

Telehealth

- All visits by telehealth unless a physical exam is warranted

Use of Interdisciplinary Team

All disciplines being used

- SW and Chaplain doing supportive care. Calling families to provide support, assisting with family contact with patients
- All members are reminding fellow colleagues that palliative care is available

Observations

Palliative care census lower with COVID

- Focus on role to keep non-COVID patients out of the hospital

Advice to Prepare for COVID

Preparation

- Never too soon to plan
- Once things start to happen – things change rapidly

Clinical Care

- Assist with through-put of patients within the hospital

Collaboration

- Share the work

Team Safety

- Protect team since they will be in for the long haul.

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Consolidated, edited and condensed by C Dahlin from interview with DNP, AGACNP-BC, CRNP, CCRN, ACHPN, Advanced Practice Manager, Palliative Care Program at Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and Penn Presbyterian Hospital.