Managing Workload and Referrals During Peak or Crisis Periods

Specialty Palliative Care Crisis Service Design

Hospital at Crisis Capacity

Patient is likely to benefit from care in the hospital/ICU/ventilator

Patient unlikely to benefit from hospitalization – Shelter in Place (home, ALF, SNF)

Complex palliative care needs unresponsive to front line team efforts; pal care referral appropriate

All patients

Palliative care specialist consultation triaged as follows:
- ICU and ED
- General hospital
- Units
- All other settings

Treating team has access to 24/7 hotline staffed by palliative care specialist

Stabilized

Standard Telemedicine support

Comfort medication packs provided to caregivers with support of 24/7 palliative care telephone hotline

Complex symptoms and/or EOL

All patients

Treating team has access to symptom and communication protocols:
capc.org/training/learning-pathways/covid-19-response-training +24/7 hotline staffed by palliative care specialist
• **Clinical Guides to Share with All Clinicians:**
  o COVID-19 communication guidance: [https://www.vitaltalk.org/guides/covid-19-communication-skills/](https://www.vitaltalk.org/guides/covid-19-communication-skills/)
  o To share with clinical teams via:
    ▪ ‘Crisis Command’ team
    ▪ Crisis response email/internal updates
    ▪ Intranet/education web pages
    ▪ Via clinical team leaders
    ▪ **Any** clinical staff providing telemedicine should have access to communication and symptom guidance

• **Palliative Care Referral Criteria:** [https://www.capc.org/documents/762/](https://www.capc.org/documents/762/)

• **In-Home/Facility Comfort Packs:**
  o Indicated for symptom relief or end-of-life care for patients in homes or facilities who would not benefit from hospitalization and when hospice and/or home health not available
  o To mobilize symptom packs:
    ▪ Identify and engage the organization’s Command and Control structures
    ▪ Collaborate with pharmacy procurement
    ▪ Identify couriers for comfort pack delivery

• **References:**