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Project description

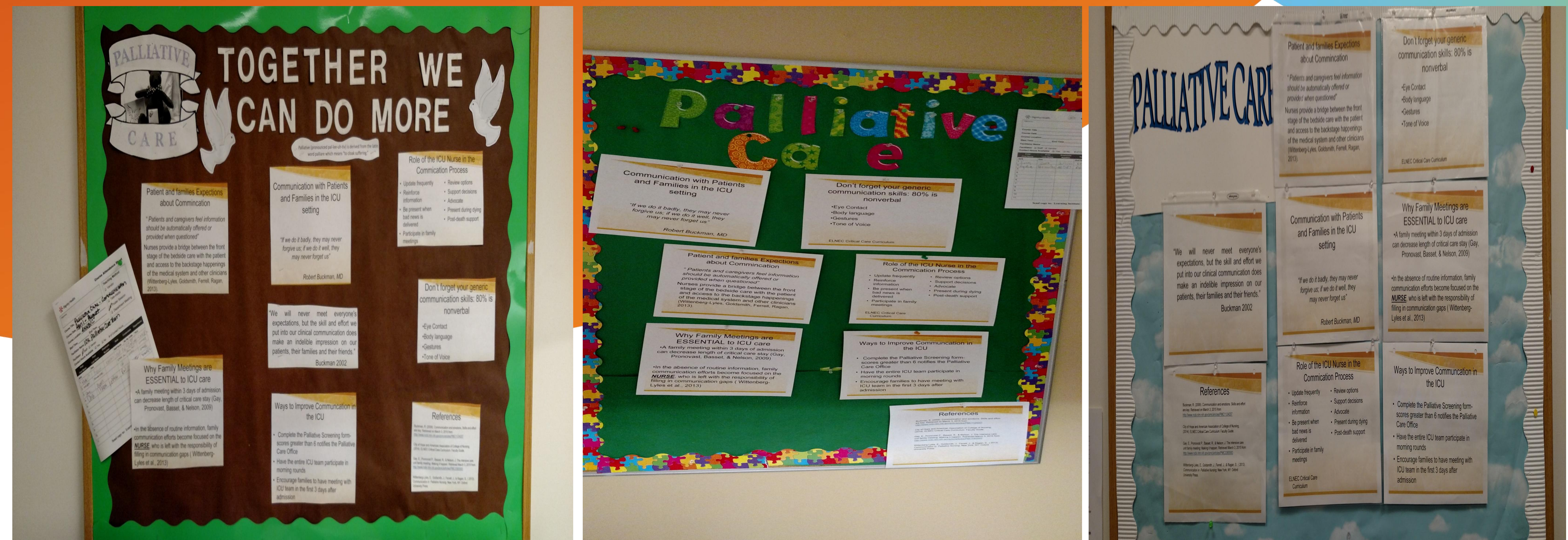
Our 570 bedded hospital, with 100 ICU beds, has a Palliative Care (PC) team of 4 providers, seeing consults throughout the hospital. With 52% of consults in the ICU, it is obvious that our patients palliative care needs cannot be met solely by this team.

The need to educate our bedside nurses in delivering primary palliative care and recognizing, when there is a need for a formal palliative care consult, has been championed by ICU nursing leadership.

A system wide initiative using triggers for PC consults, was the platform for involving bedside nurses in this endeavor. A PC committee, led by “nursing champions” from each ICU, with input from other IDT members and the PC Medical director, is leading the way.

Nursing leadership has been supportive of each ICU sending 1 “champion” for ELNEC training, to facilitate education on their unit. Each quarter, a topic is prepared by one of the “champions” and displayed on the PC board in each ICU. Bedside nurses are encouraged to read the board and sign off once completed. The next phase is to obtain feedback from our nurses about the value of this education and to extend this to the Oncology and Medical/Surgical units.

Figure 1:



Summary

- Well established Palliative Care consult service, providing specialist/secondary palliative care across the hospital, seeing >1200 consults/year with >50% in the ICU
- Identified inadequate provision of primary palliative care to a significant number of patients never seen by the palliative care consult service (particularly in the ICU)
- Opportunity to educate bedside nurses and equip them to provide primary palliative care and facilitate appropriate palliative care consults earlier, for specialist palliative care
- Implementation: Palliative care committee led by “nursing champions” initially from Neuroscience ICU, then incorporated “champions” from all adult ICUs, with input from other interdisciplinary team members
- Education: The End of Life Nursing Education (ELNEC) core curriculum – nursing champions ELNEC trained. Quarterly key topic on palliative care boards in each ICU (Figure 1.). Feedback from bedside nurses on areas of deficiency in palliative care and end of life care education

The Future: more formal education sessions/classes offering CEUs and a Palliative Care education day/seminar with lectures from ELNEC trained staff and interdisciplinary team experts in Palliative Care