

Checklist Review Following an Expected Death

Reviewing a death can be done in different ways for different purposes. Working from memory with the chart at hand, the improvement team can ask some basic questions to get a quick sense of strengths and weaknesses of care and to trigger brainstorming. Most globally, the questions are:

*From the resident's point of view, did the last part of his or her life go as well as it could?
What about the point of view of the loved ones? The staff's point of view?*

Getting more specific, one or more members of the team can use a checklist such as the following, giving yes/no answers on a "best guess" basis, still working from memory and the chart. The team could review a sample of deaths at periodic intervals and compare the samples over time. The team may want to develop some of these items into more tightly defined quality indicators that medical records personnel could track from documentation alone.

	Yes	No
1. Were the goals of care documented?		
2. Were the resident's end-of-life preferences documented?		
3. Were orders, advance directives, physician notes, nursing notes, and social service notes adequately consistent with each other?		
4. Were the resident's end-of-life preferences respected?		
5. Were the resident and/or family aware of the diagnosis and prognosis?		
6. Was there open communication with family throughout the dying process?		
7. Were the loved ones satisfied with the care?		
8. Were all appropriate disciplines involved?		
9. Was hospice considered?		

	Adequately done?		Adequately documented?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
10. Were psychosocial needs assessed?				
11. Were psychosocial needs addressed?				
12. Were spiritual needs assessed?				
13. Were spiritual needs addressed?				
14. Was pain adequately assessed?				
15. If present, was pain adequately treated?				
16. If present, was dyspnea adequately addressed?				
17. If present, was nausea adequately addressed?				
18. If present, was constipation adequately addressed?				
19. If present, was dry mouth adequately addressed?				
20. If present, was anxiety/restlessness adequately addressed?				
21. If present, was depression adequately addressed?				

Comments and ideas for improvement:

Review date: _____ Reviewer(s): _____

Date of death: _____ Nursing unit: _____ Resident initials: _____