

Personal and professional narratives of transitions in palliative care: a social worker's narrative.

Author : Anne Johnson

Title: "Cast me gently into morning, for the night has been unkind".

This paper is written from the perspective of a social worker from the palliative care ward of Calvary hospital in Sydney. It examines the management of anxiety in the context of a palliative care ward, and how this anxiety affects team work. The heightened anxiety often experienced by patients, carers and the health professionals is considered. The impact this heightened anxiety may have on assessments and interventions made by the clinical team is discussed, using case studies which illustrate some of the complex clinical dilemmas commonly faced in this setting. The relationship between family functioning and clinical team functioning is also explored. Given the goal of providing optimal care, how might difficult dilemmas be recognised and approached? Relevant theoretical concepts are discussed, with a particular focus on the therapeutic use of narratives in various forms, such as music and journalling, for the patients, carers and health professionals.