Appendix 2

Barriers to the Care of the Dying

Families and patients:
- Nonacceptance and denial of death
- Carer fatigue
- Spiritual/psychological distress
- Poor communication within families
- No family or no close family
- Fear of medications eg opioids
- Lack of support/preparation for children of the dying
- Fear of hospice
- Financial matters eg time to access benefits
- Family dynamics/conflicts
- Alternative Therapy

Health Professionals:
- Diagnosing “dying”
- Wish to prolong life when there is no quality
- Nonacceptance of dying by staff (eg chemotherapy when inappropriate)
- Knowledge gap of staff
- Lack of staff or inexperienced staff (eg not writing up breakthroughs or not knowing when to use them)
- Not referring to palliative care when appropriate
- Poor communication with patients and families about death
- Patients not informed about prognosis
- Little recognition of spiritual needs
- NFR orders not being documented
- Lack of continuity of care ie different nurses or doctors
- Fear of medications eg opioids, midazolam
- Managing transition to palliative care
- Palliative patients are low priority
- Doctors unwillingness to listen to nurses
- Workload restraints for doctors, nurses and allied health workers
- Belief that death is a failure

Hospital Systems:
- Lack or limited dedicated palliative care beds
- Insufficient private rooms
- Acute hospitals are geared to curative care
- Overworked staff (insufficient time available)
- Wards (accommodation, facilities) not appropriate to end of life care

Community Care:
- Doctors not doing home visits
- Lack of after hours cover
- Ignorance re care of the dying
- Insufficient community resources eg nurses, allied health professionals
- Time restraints on nurses when visiting the home
- Too much burden put on carers
- Insufficient support at night
- Costs to patient and carers at home
- Difficulty providing equipment
- Lack of funding
- Lack of night sitters
- No counselling services
- Availability of some drugs, eg Octreotide, Gabapentin, Midazolam, Buscopan
- Access to resources depends on locality

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