

Why does the AAU need a palliative care room?

Authors: Katrina Sheikh^A and Ashkan Sadighi^B

Approximately 15% of all emergency hospital admissions in England belong to the 1% of people in their final year of life. The average number of admissions a person will have in their final year of life is 3.5 admissions (cancer patients = 5.1); the average number of bed days in the final year of life is 29.7 days; 29% of hospital inpatients are in the last year of life; a higher proportion for those over 85 years or under a medical specialty; and an estimated 20% of the NHS budget is spent on care for those in the last year of life.

Data were collected over 8 weeks; 34 patients were identified as palliative care patients and were categorised at end-of-life; these figures were presented to management and funding has been secured by the charity CW+ to build a palliative care room on the acute assessment unit.

It is important to recognise uncertainty and identify dying, place appropriate ceilings of treatment for patients and communicate better with patients, family and between members of staff. The palliative care room will provide comfort and a 'safe environment'. ■

Conflicts of interest

None declared.

Authors: ^AImperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, London, UK;

^BChelsea and Westminster NHS Trust, London, UK