

Introducing a Learning From Deaths Meeting in a Hospice

Introduction

'Learning from deaths' is a monthly meeting open to all clinical staff from across hospice services. It is a forum to discuss, reflect on and learn from the deaths of our patients.

Method

The meeting was established as it was noted there was no formal forum to discuss deaths in the hospice and a positive experience attending a similar event at another organisation gave the forward momentum and inspiration to create this meeting. Suggestions of deaths to be discussed can be made by any clinician and may include deaths which have been challenging or traumatic as well as deaths which have been examples of good practice.

An overview of the case is presented including what happened, what went well and what could be improved. Senior clinicians are present to guide the discussion, ensuring a positive focus is maintained and assisting with identifying the learning for the future.

Results

This meeting was launched in July 2019. There has been an encouraging turnout with 15 – 25 attendees at each meeting, from all professional backgrounds and clinical teams. Positive feedback has been given from those attending including comments regarding the tone of the meeting and it being a safe, reflective non-judgmental space. A further strength is considering how reflection and learning can improve future practice and care. Individuals have also commented that the discussions have given them a greater understanding of the hospice services.

A summary of the discussion is recorded and learning log is gathered during the meetings to ensure that discussion is put into action. For example following one discussion a series of educational sessions were organised about the withdrawal of non-invasive ventilation.

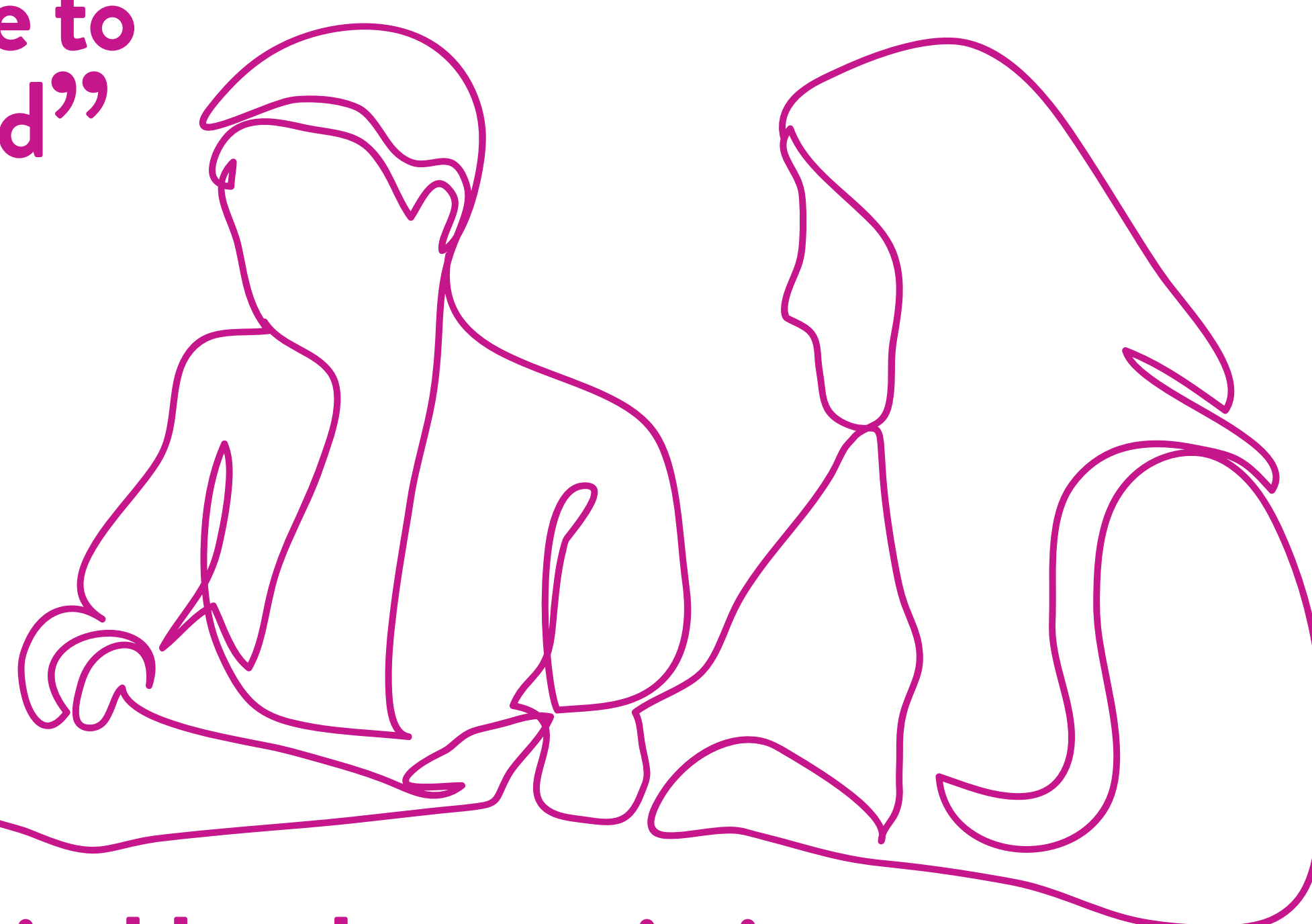
Conclusions

Learning from deaths is now considered a vital part of clinical practice, support for staff and an opportunity for learning.

In the future invitations to attend the meeting could be extended to other clinicians from outside the hospice who were involved in the individual's care including General Practitioners, District Nurses or members of the ambulance service.

“I find the meeting is a safe space to talk about the deaths on the ward”

“Useful to have the views of others who have not been directly involved in the patient's care”



“Really useful to reflect on the deaths of our patients”

“A place for discussions of this kind has been missing for a longtime in this organization and it really good to have a safe, non-judgmental space for this”

“I have learnt things I can apply to the care of other patients”

Authors

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