Epidemiological characterization of patients under Community Hospice Service provided by Kasih Hospice Foundation

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Community hospice service is an integral component to the ecosystem in providing end-of-life care to patients and their family. However, data from this community service remains scarce. We studied the characteristics of patients received community hospice care from Kasih Hospice Foundation (KHF). **Methods:** This retrospective observational study included 7080 terminally-ill patients under the care by KHF between January 2005 and June 2022. Data on demographics and clinical histories were extracted, verified and cleaned from pre-existing database. Descriptive analyses were performed using SPSS version 23.0. **Results:** A total of 6737 patients with complete data were included. More than half (53%) were females with a mean age of 64.5 (15.78) years. Two-third were ≥60 years old, with 31.2% aged 18-59 years, 0.7% aged 12-17 years and 0.8% aged <12 years. About 53.1% were of Chinese ethnicity, followed by 33.6% being Malay and 11.6% being Indian. Majority of patients received hospice care due to disease progression related to malignancies (76%), with lung cancer being the commonest (15.3%), followed by breast (11%) and colorectal (10.1%) carcinoma. KHF also provided end-of-life support for patients with end stage renal disease (8.7%), neurodegenerative diseases (1.2%), severe heart failure (0.6%), chronic pulmonary diseases (0.7%), liver failure (0.2%) and congenital diseases (0.2%). Services provided was free-of-charge, which included home visits and care, teleconsultation, lending of equipment and bereavement process. **Conclusion:** The scope of community hospice service is broad to cater the needs for terminally-ill patients from all age groups and various diseases. Understanding the epidemiological characteristics of patients allows the organization to optimize her limited resources, and organize and deliver her services effectively.