Impact of a Nurse-Led Palliative Care Screening Tool on Medical Oncology Units

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There is a lack of early integration of palliative care in patients with advanced cancer, which has been shown to result in suboptimal quality of life across their disease continuum. Standardized palliative care screening tools are valuable for identifying patients with early palliative care needs but have yet to be adapted into standard practice in the oncology community. This project aimed to determine whether a nurse-led palliative care screening tool increased palliative care consultations, decreased the average length of stay, reduced readmission rates among adult patients with solid tumor malignancies, and improved knowledge and confidence among nurses regarding palliative care.

AT A GLANCE
- A lack of early integration of palliative care for patients receiving oncology care has been linked to poor quality-of-life outcomes.
- The use of validated screening tools can help eliminate the ambiguity surrounding when to schedule a palliative care consultation, improving patient outcomes.
- The autonomy granted by nurse-led tools facilitates nurses having a more principal role in patient discussions within an interprofessional team.

KEYWORDS
palliative medicine; oncology; palliative care criteria; screening tools

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