

Title:

State Advisory Council on Palliative Care and Quality of Life: Advancing Palliative Care in Alabama

Kristi A. Acker, DNP

Graduate Nursing, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, USA

Session Title:

Evidence-Based Practice Posters Session 2

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Alabama, access and palliative care

References:

CAPC Stat by STate Report Card (2015). Accessed from <https://reportcard.capc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/CAPC-Report-Card-2015.pdf>

Abstract Summary:

According to the Center to Advance Palliative Care, Alabama continues to lag behind in providing access to quality palliative care programs. An inter-professional advisory council was formed in an effort to promote palliative care by providing consumer education and disseminating current palliative care resources which are available within the state.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to understand how the Alabama State Advisory Council on Palliative Care & Quality of Life was established.	The background for legislative process for forming the interprofessional advisory council on palliative care will be discussed.
The learner will be able to identify key topics addressed by the Alabama State Advisory Council on Palliative Care & Quality of Life	A summary of current topics that have been addressed by the advisory council and the strategies for promoting palliative care in the state will be disseminated.

Abstract Text:

According to the Center for Advancing Palliative Care State by State Report Card (2015) the national average for hospital-based palliative care access was a B. However, a few states, including Alabama, had near failing grades. Many barriers exist which limit palliative care access in the state. Some of the barriers limiting quality palliative care include the lack of a specialized workforce and poor communication skill sets for leading difficult end of life discussions. Additional barriers to policy, research and educational preparation persist.

The changing landscape surrounding palliative care continues to evolve. Some of the contributing factors in the evolution of palliative care includes new delivery care models, an aging population, and improved reimbursement mechanisms. Additionally, best evidence supports that patients who receive early palliative care access not only have improved outcomes and satisfaction, but also improved life expectancy. In 2015, in an effort to provide consumer awareness of patient centered and family focused palliative care, the Alabama Legislature passed an Act establishing the first interdisciplinary advisory council for advancing palliative care. Appointed by the State Health Officer, members of council were directed to include medical, nursing (mandatory APRN), social work, pharmacy, consumer, and spiritual expertise.

The Alabama State Council on Palliative Care and Quality of Life defined their purpose for maximizing the effectiveness of palliative care initiatives in the state by first ensuring comprehensive and accurate information and education about palliative care be available to the public, health care providers, and health care facilities. A recent amendment to the State's *Natural Death Act* was passed, allowing for the adoption of a Portable Do Not Attempt Resuscitate document. The development of this important form, which was guided by the council, allows for patient end of life preferences to be accessed and honored across multiple health care settings. Several ongoing initiatives concerning palliative care are in development.