



Caring for patients with terminal delirium: palliative care unit and home care nurses' experiences.

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Abstract: To explore palliative care unit and home care nurses' experiences of caring for patients with terminal delirium.

A qualitative exploratory design using individual interviews.

Participants included five nurses working in an interdisciplinary palliative care unit located in a large Canadian city hospital, and four nurses from a palliative home care nursing team located in the same city.

Nurses in both sites experienced multiple challenges caring for delirious patients. Additional education on delirium and collaborative teamwork were viewed as key factors in enhancing their ability to care for and support this patient and family population. Four core themes reflected the participants' perceptions and experiences: experiencing distress; the importance of presence; valuing the team; and the need to know more.

Findings suggest the need for interdisciplinary educational initiatives focused on the identification and management of terminal delirium, and targeted to the specific context in which nurses practise.

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