

Developing a new hospital-based paediatric palliative care programme: analysis of critical components

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University Hospital Motol Prague, Czech Republic



- 11 pediatric departments, 575 beds
- 22 adult care departments, 1 624 beds
- 972 MDs, 3200 other HCP
- more than 1 300 000 patients per year

University Hospital Motol
Prague, Czech Republic
Pediatric Supportive Care Team

- founded by Lucie Hrdličková, MD in **2016**
- currently **20 members**
 - 6 physicians (1,7 FTE)
 - 5 nurses (1,0 FTE)
 - 3 psychologists (1,0 FTE)
 - 2 social workers (0,8 FTE)
 - 1 chaplain (0,2 FTE)
 - 1 bereavement counsellor (0,2 FTE)
 - project manager & data manager (1,0 FTE)
- supporting around **40 patients** and their families at the moment, **150** referrals per year





How have we got to the point where we are now?

What **helped** the development of the programme?

What **barriers** did we have to overcome?

Analysis of critical components

- 21 semistructured interviews with members of the team and key stakeholders
 - 4 physicians
 - 4 nurses
 - 3 social workers
 - psychologist
 - chaplain
 - team coordinator
 - C-suite member (deputy director of the hospital)
 - 3 mentors
 - 3 collaborating physicians from other departments
- interviews recorded, transcribed verbatim, thematic analysis

5 critical components identified

- Leadership
- Team culture
- Education and mentoring
- External environment (collaboration)
- Financial aspects

Leadership

- A leader with clear and strong vision is needed
- Personal example and role model
- Continuously supporting the team to achieve its mission

"It all stands and falls with the person in charge."

"Lucie as our leader, who inspires us with her energy, fights for us, and motivates us with her courageous vision."

Team culture

- Palliative care provides/requires unique working environment
- Team members support, respect and listen to each other
- Multidisciplinarity with clear and specific roles within the team
- Team procedures

„I think the key was to include all the professions and being open for their input, a true example of multidisciplinarity.“

“I really appreciate the reliability of everyone in the team, their flexibility, what is said is true. All the meetings and minutes keep their structure and value.“

Education and mentoring

- specialized palliative care has been a new role for everyone
- 2 years of intensive training prior the launch
- ongoing supervision, mentoring and regular bi-annual strategic planning

“Learning from experts abroad really pushed us forward. We would have done much smaller progress trying to figure it all out on our own.”

“You are learning much more and much quicker than companies and organizations usually do.”

External environment (collaboration)

- developing a palliative care programme is a diplomatic mission
- effective collaboration with other departments is absolutely necessary
- start with those who like you
- a thin line between general and specialized palliative care

„Nobody knew what to expect from us. Other physicians felt like we are their competition, families thought about death and dying.“

“You need to respect the existing organizational culture and carefully offer the help of the team repeatedly over and over.“

“Building relationships with a nurse over there, a young physician somewhere else, one by one. But also with people at financial department and HR, that was also important.“

Financial aspects

- our team started with no reimbursement from the system
- a private philanthropical support for the initial stage
- long-term thinking necessary (leadership / vision)

„Timing was crucial. The fact that we started at the moment when there was a great opportunity to receive a grant from the Avast foundation, when both professional community and general public were open and supportive to palliative care.“

Take home message

- Developing a new palliative care programme within a hospital system is a challenging but rewarding experience.
- You need a **strong leader** with clear vision, **team** who will work as a team and get adequate **education**, ability to **network and collaborate** with other clinicians and hospital management, and (some) **resources** to start.
- Please get in touch if we can help: martin.loucka@fnmotol.cz
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Thank you!