

ACO Critical Thinking Exercise

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A 74-year-old patient with advanced Alzheimer's disease who is expected to live only four more months and also lives at home with her 80-year-old husband who cares for her would need a variety of health care services and specialists. She would need hospice care, palliative care, home nursing and caregivers, and speech therapy. She would also need a neurologist, a geriatrician, and a chaplain.

This patient would need a hospice program because she is not expected to live for much longer. She needs long-term care because this period is expected to be more than 30 days. Hospice care can be provided in her home rather than in a facility. This type of care is what she needs because she lives at home with her husband, who cares for her (Sayles, 2020, p. 45).

Geriatric palliative care is very important for this patient. As an elderly 74-years-old patient, she needs geriatric care. To help keep her comfortable from any physical pain and also keep her quality of life as high as possible for the remainder of her living days, she needs palliative care as part of her hospice program (Sayles, 2020, p. 23, 45).

This patient needs part-time home nursing care and caregivers. Because she is confined to bed and a wheelchair, she needs a lot of help with everyday activities like going to the bathroom, bathing, etc. Her 80-year-old husband may have mobility issues himself and probably finds aspects of her care too physical and problematic. He also needs a break sometimes (Sayles, 2020, pp. 42-43).

This patient needs speech therapy. She no longer communicates verbally because of her advanced Alzheimer's disease. "The goal of language and speech therapy is to improve Alzheimer's patients' current function as much as possible, as well as to work on lost functions

and to teach coping skills for patients to manage their disease as effectively as possible” (C-Care, 2016).

This patient also needs a few specialists. She needs a neurologist because she has and is in the end stages of Alzheimer’s disease (Sayles, 2020, p. 24). She also needs a geriatrician because they specialize in care for the elderly. She is 74 years old and needs palliative care for the end of life (Sayles, 2020, p. 23). Because she is not expected to live much longer, this patient needs spiritual care and guidance as much as physical care. A chaplain would be helpful to pray for her. Chaplains are on staff at hospice care providers. The patient may no longer communicate verbally, but she may still communicate in other ways. If the chaplain can communicate with her to answer any questions, he could alleviate any fear or spiritual concerns. He also can work with the husband and family to find peace and ensure she does not die alone (Crossroads Hospice Charitable Foundation, 2017).

References

C-Care (2016, Dec. 14). *The Benefits of Language and Speech Therapy in Alzheimer's Patients*.

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