

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to closely look at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Communication about Patient Goals of Care

Summary:

A patient presented to the Emergency Department (ED) with pain noted to the right leg from a fall earlier in the day. Following an assessment in the ED, the decision was made to send the patient to a tertiary care centre for assessment to rule out necrotising fasciitis.

Enroute to the tertiary care centre, a discussion occurred regarding advanced care plan wishes for the patient. At this time, the patient expressed a wish for no invasive treatments for their condition. In light of this information, the ambulance returned to the originating facility. The patient was admitted and passed away the next day.

Keywords: Communication, Patient Goals of Care

This review is based on a single event.

Findings of the Review:

The patient's wishes for no invasive treatments were unknown to the health care providers prior to the transfer to the tertiary care centre

There were varying thoughts on the diagnosis and plan of care for the patient.

Information was absent from the health record (i.e. Advanced Care Plan, Plan of Care/assessments, Health Care Directive)

Given the patient's wishes for no invasive treatments, the outcome may have been the same.

System Learning:

Educate health care providers regarding the need to discuss and document Advanced Care Plan wishes/Goals of Care in the Emergency Department prior to the consideration of interfacility transfers.

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