

Cancer pain relief and palliative care:
report of a WHO expert committee
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Abstract

Considers what can and should be done to comfort patients suffering from the distressing

symptoms of advanced cancer. Prepared by nine renowned experts in oncology, neurology, pain management and nursing care, the book draws together the evidence and arguments needed to define clear lines of action, whether on the part of the medical and nursing professions or in the form of national legislation. Throughout, arguments for palliative care take their force from the magnitude of unrelieved suffering currently borne by the majority of terminally ill patients. Although methods for the relief of pain are emphasized, other physical, psychological, and spiritual needs for comfort are also included in the reports comprehensive recommendations. The concept of palliative care is explained in terms of its concern with quality of life and comfort before death, emphasis on the family as the unit of care, dependence on teamwork, and relationship to curative interventions. Subsequent sections concentrate on measures for the relief of pain and other physical symptoms, the psychosocial needs of the patient and family, and the need for spiritual comfort. A section devoted to ethics provides several important statements concerning the legal and ethical distinction between killing the pain and killing the patient, and the need to recognize the limits of medicine

Citation

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touched something with his chief antagonist in poststructural poetics, selects the course.

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