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Palliative care - A global perspective

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Despite current ease of travel and improved access to information due to technological advances and global access to the internet, extreme disparities remain with regard to the accessibility and availability of healthcare and healthcare related technology throughout the global community. Throughout the world, people who suffer from chronic or debilitating illness. Find themselves in need of care that is appropriate to their condition, cost effective, and readily available.

In the developed world, nations such as the United States find that 5% of the population are responsible for more than half of the health care dollars spent. In this area of the world, the goal of palliative care is to find effective ways to provide care that meets the needs of the individual in a manner that reduces the financial burden on society. The initiation of palliative care programs that utilize mid-level providers and provide care at home or through the use of outpatient clinics has been a technique used by almost every state in the Union.

In the developing world, countries such as Nigeria have

seen a decrease in the support individuals receive from their families. This lack of support, coupled with the payfor-service model that often requires individuals to receive financial support to pay for healthcare, has left many patients without access to adequate care. The focus of palliative care in Nigeria, and similar nations, has been to attempt to set up programs that follow the Public Health Approach to Palliative Care model set out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and to find ways for those with chronic illness to receive the care they need, despite any problems with payment or any lack of family support.

A literature review was conducted in order to explore the international need for palliative care systems, and to compare and contrast palliative care needs and resources associated with countries of varying socioeconomic standings. This presentation will discuss the challenges faced by the global community and will explore the etiology of disparities that exist within and between select nations.

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