

Principles & Practices in Palliative Care

Palliative Care Social Work at Pilgrims Hospices

Palliative Care Social Workers Jane Malbon and Sinead de Nogla.

What is palliative care social work?

Palliative care social workers specialise in working with adults and children who are at the end of their life, their families, those they are close to and their communities.

They use their particular skills and knowledge to help people to deal with the impact of what is happening to them, including loss and bereavement, and to have a good life and a good death.

They work in partnership with people they offer support to. They work alongside other professionals, agencies, organisations and as part of the wider community.

They bring social care expertise and perspective to situations in order to ensure that people get the support they need. Palliative care social workers may work in hospices or hospitals, in the community or in prisons.

(Association of Palliative Care Social Workers –APCSW 2016)

Activity

What is the role of the specialist palliative care social worker?



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Social work is an integral part of the multi disciplinary team here at Pilgrims Hospices. Through psychosocial assessment of the individual we try to establish what changes the illness has wrought as well as who they are. How their life has changed since the illness and who or what currently supports them.

Build a therapeutic relationship with the ill person and family, allowing them to feel safe and comfortable, communicating interest and respect to allow their anxieties to surface.

We try to understand their reaction to the illness and its implications for them, how they have dealt with crises in the past, draw on strengths.

Analysis and clear thinking on the issues presented, working out with the ill person and their carer what is uppermost in their concerns 'what matters most'.

Identify any practical or emotional unfinished business and offer support as appropriate.

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Working with conflicts of interest and priorities of those involved. Taking time to listen and avoid being propelled into inappropriate 'doing'.

Help dying people and people who are close to them, to identify apparent changes in mental and physical capacity and respond supportively.

Recognise the impact of loss, grief, death and dying on the whole family and the people who play a part in supporting the dying person.

Advice around housing, employment, finances and benefits, funding and grant applications.

Work in partnership with people to plan their care, drawing on their own resources and networks as well as looking to other sources of professional or community support.

Facilitation of support groups for Carers and co-facilitation of bereavement support services.

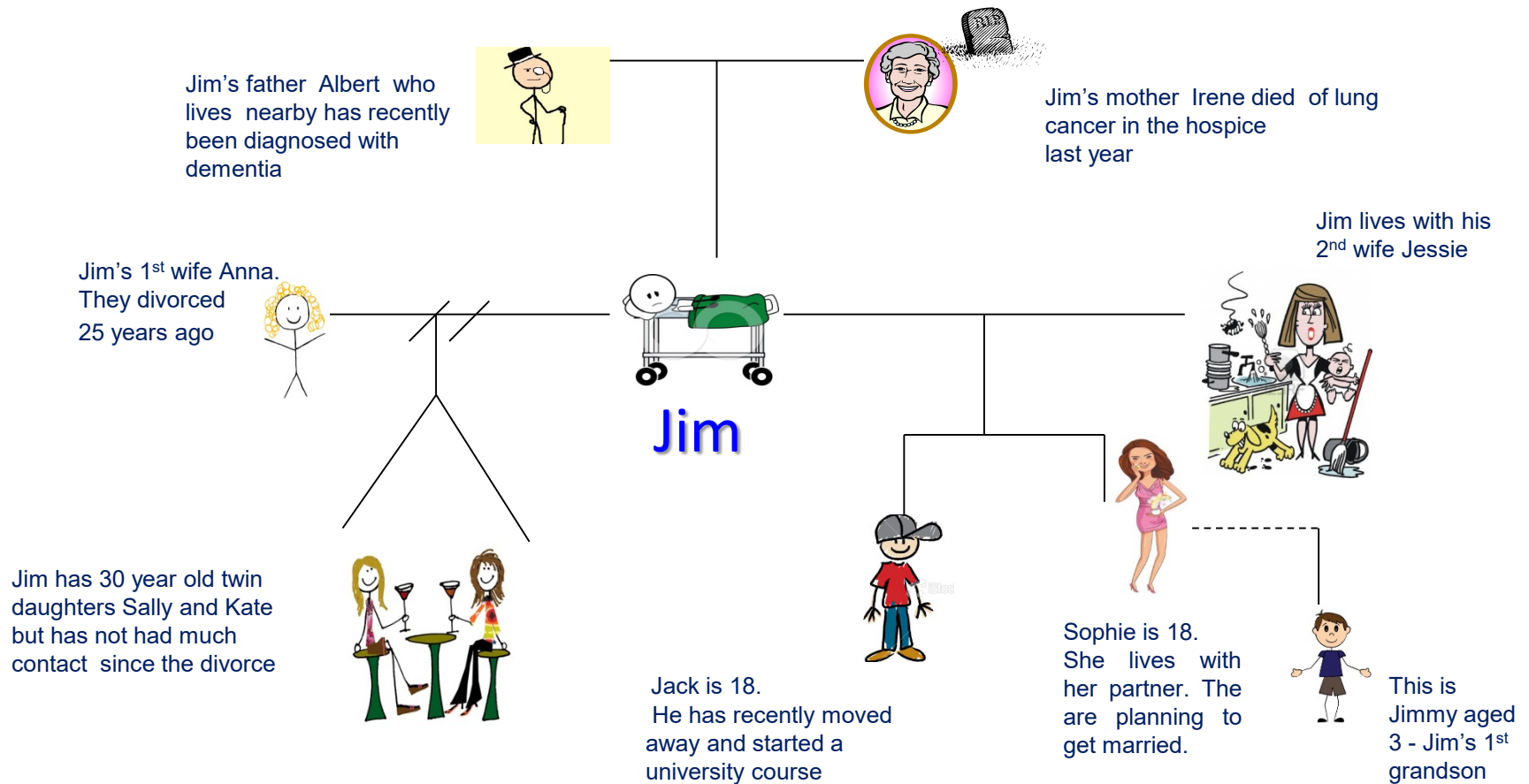
Contribute to building and maintaining therapeutic relationships, seeking to strengthen and sustain relationships

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Last but not least-Help people to identify when they are at risk of or have suffered abuse or neglect and support them in making choices about what action they would like to be taken.

This list is neither exhaustive nor inconclusive. The role of the palliative care social worker is far reaching and for example may involve supporting with the identification of future care for the ill persons animal or assisting with the coordination of support to plan the ill person's funeral.

Principles & Practice in End of Life Care



Introducing you to Jim's Genogram

Final thought.....

Is dying a medical or social concern?

