

Few critical care nurses feel competent in providing palliative care

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(HealthDay)—Most critical care nurses feel inadequately prepared to

provide palliative care, according to a study published in the October issue of *Critical Care Nurse*.

Alexander T. Wolf, R.N., from TriHealth in Cincinnati, and colleagues examined critical care nurses' perceived knowledge of [palliative care](#) in a quantitative, descriptive study. Survey questionnaires were distributed to 517 critical care nurses across seven intensive care units. Participants' perceptions of palliative care in their practice setting and their recent experiences of moral distress were measured using validated instruments.

One hundred sixty-seven completed questionnaires were analyzed. The researchers found that in any palliative care domain, fewer than 40 percent of [respondents](#) reported being highly competent. Most respondents reported little palliative care education, with 38 percent reporting no palliative care education in the previous two years. During the study period, most respondents reported moral distress; levels varied significantly based on perceived use of palliative care. Higher levels of moral distress tended to be experienced by respondents who perceived less frequent use of palliative care.

"These results call upon health system leaders and educators to identify opportunities for palliative care education for critical care nurses and interprofessional teams, strengthen resources for preventing and managing moral distress, and empower critical care nurses to identify and eliminate barriers to high-quality palliative care," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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