

5th World Congress on

HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

July 18-19, 2018 Melbourne, Australia

Pushparanee Somasundram

Sengkang General Hospital, Singapore

Diverse and unique end of life practices in a Buddhist patient in Singapore

Mr C had terminal cancer of the colon. He was keen to have Tibetan Buddhist rituals and prayers prior to and after his death so he can have a good rebirth. This entailed was no touching of the body for 8 hours after the last breath leaves his body for the soul to leave peacefully. Tibetan Buddhists believe the soul is still around in the body until 8 hours after death. The dilemma for the health care worker was how to pronounce time of death of the patient. A win compromise was achieved after health care workers discussed and analyzed the inputs from the family and the monks. The ECG monitor was set up before the 8 hours period. This allowed the health care worker and the monks to know when death (asystole) occurred. Just before his demise, Monks performed rituals and holy chants. Relatives refrained from crying as it may hinder a happy rebirth. They also placed holy garments on the patient before death, placing Buddhist pictures and their meditation beads in his hands. The healthcare worker could still do the monitoring and pronounce the time of death. The monks could do the prayers for the departing soul. The family is happy the loved ones managed to have a peaceful death. Clinical importance of understanding the cultural and psychosocial aspects of patient care ensures there are no glitches in bereavement process for the grief-stricken family.

Biography

Pushparanee Somasundram is the Senior Staff Registrar in the Department of Family Medicine in Sengkang General Hospital, Singapore. Her research and care focus are on older people and end of life care. She serves on many professional committees and advisory boards.

psomasundram@yahoo.com**Notes:**