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Use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) by Washington State hospices.

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Abstract

PURPOSE: To assess the use of complementary and alternative medicine in hospice care in the state of Washington.

METHODS: Hospices offering inpatient and outpatient care in Washington State were surveyed by phone interview.

RESULTS: Response rate was 100%. Results indicated that 86% of Washington State hospices offered complementary and alternative services to their patients, most frequently massage (87%), music therapy (74%), energy healing (65%), aromatherapy (45%), guided imagery (45%), compassionate touch (42%), acupuncture (32%), **pet therapy** (32%), meditation (29%), art therapy (22%), reflexology (19%), and hypnotherapy (16%). Most hospices relied on volunteers with or without small donations to offer such services.

CONCLUSIONS: Complementary and alternative therapies are widely used by Washington State hospices but not covered under hospice benefits. Extensive use of these therapies seems to warrant the inclusion of complementary and alternative providers as part of hospice staff, and reimbursement schedules need to be integrated into hospice care.

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Publication Types, MeSH Terms

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