



Policy Brief

Making a difference in palliative care populations through capture, transfer, and feedback of patient centred outcomes data: A systematic review.

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Introduction: Patient Centred Outcome Measures (PCOMs) are a way for patients and those close to them to say how they are feeling by filling out a questionnaire. Many of these measures are used in palliative care, and they are an important way of measuring the difference we make to palliative care patients. Often the information that patients provide is passed on to the health professionals looking after them. It's not clear whether the process of passing on this information makes a difference to palliative care patients by itself; we aimed to find out by reviewing existing evidence.

Summary:

Research methods: We systematically searched for all existing evidence that answered this question. We searched databases of articles, journals, and collections of unpublished evidence. We found 16 relevant articles.

Research findings: We found that feed-back of outcome measures leads to more communication between patients and professionals and can reduce anxiety and improve emotional quality of life. But there is no change in physical or overall quality of life. Most of the research we found was in patients with cancer, and more research is needed in patients with other illnesses.

Key findings:

- PCOMs allow us to measure the difference we make to patients in palliative care, but the process of collecting and feeding back this information itself improves patients' care.
- It also results in improved emotional and psychological quality of life for palliative care patients
- There is no difference in symptoms or overall

Policy recommendations:

- PCOMs should be implemented more widely in palliative care populations.
- This will allow us to measure the difference palliative care makes, but will also impact positively on patient care and quality of life.

Conclusions: The use of PCOMs in palliative care not only allows us to measure the difference palliative care makes to patients, but itself positively impacts on patient care and quality of life. The case for wider implementation of PCOMs in palliative care is strengthened by this finding.

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