

# The use of personal narratives in hospital based palliative care interventions – an integrative literature review

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## AIM

To review the literature on personal narratives in hospital based palliative care interventions.

## INTRODUCTION

People living with life-threatening illness experience unmet existential needs despite the growing research and clinical field of palliative care. Narrative interventions show promise in complying existential needs, but there is a necessity for more knowledge on the characteristics of narrative interventions and the feasibility of using personal narratives in a hospital. The specific research questions of this study were:

### Research questions

What characterizes personal narrative interventions in hospital based palliative care?

What is the purpose and significance of personal narrative interventions for the patients?

What is the provision of using personal narratives in general palliative care?

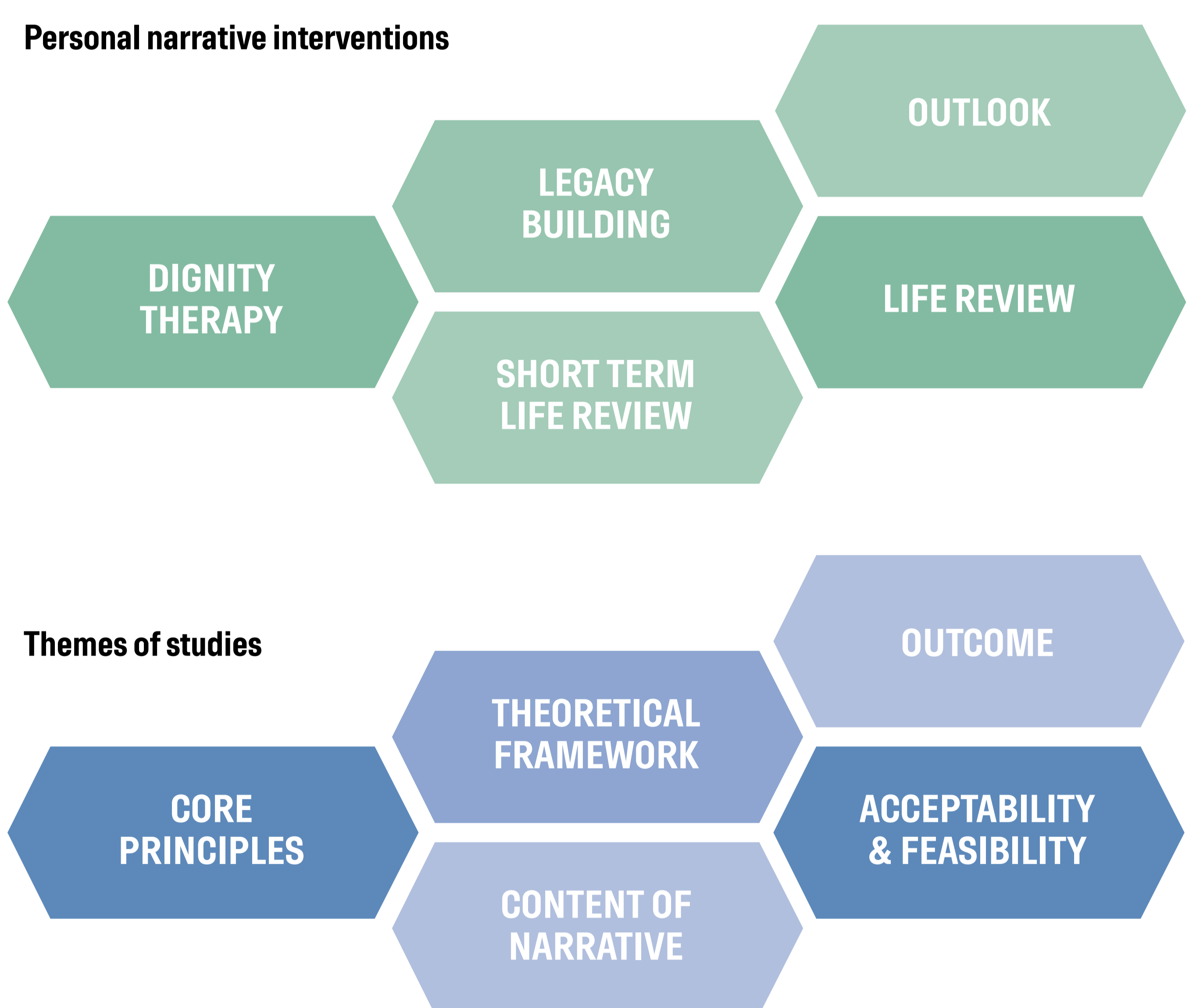
## METHODS

We conducted a systematic integrative review with qualitative analysis and narrative synthesis in adherence to PRISMA where applicable. PROSPERO#:CRD42018089202. A systematic search was conducted in Pubmed, Embase, SCOPUS, Cinahl, SocINDEX and PsychInfo for primary research articles published until June 2018. Full-text articles were assessed against eligibility criteria followed by a discussion of quality using Critical Appraisal Skills Programme.

## RESULTS

Out of 480 original articles, 24 studies were found eligible for this review: eight qualitative, 14 quantitative, and two mixed methods. The articles reported on Dignity therapy, Legacy building, Outlook, Short term life review and Life review. Data analysis resulted in five themes: core principles, theoretical framework, content of narrative, outcome and acceptability and feasibility.

The authors have no conflicts of interests.



## CONCLUSION

Personal narratives in hospital based palliative care is and can be managed in a hospital setting to relieve psychosocial and existential suffering. The personal narrative interventions at the hospital are characterized by a common psychotherapeutic theoretical understanding and aim of relieving existential suffering. However, different interventions have been developed. Each use their own procedure manual to guide, structure and facilitate the personal narrative to the specific purpose of boosting a sense of meaning, and enhance quality of life. Although the evidence from this review is from a hospital setting, the scope is limited beyond a specialized palliative care setting.

