

Expectations of palliative treatment in patients with lung cancer and their relatives

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STUDY AIM

The aim of this study is to investigate Danish lung cancer patients' expectations to palliative chemotherapy.

BACKGROUND

Many incurable cancer patients are offered palliative chemotherapy in order to ease symptoms and improve quality of life. Patients and their relatives may choose to receive palliative chemotherapy for various reasons, which may compromise optimal quality of life. International studies indicate that many patients and their relatives expect cure from palliative chemotherapy.

METHODS

Patients and relatives each completed a managable and adapted short questionnaire of one question og their treatment expectations with possibility of more than one answer options: "Relief of pain", "Prolongation of life", "Cure" and "Don't know". The questionnaire was handed out to patients and relatives prior to their first to fifth line of chemotherapy. The patients completed the questionnaire up to three times during the course of treatment over a three months period and relatives completed the questionnaire once.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

A total of 48 out of 101 possible lung cancer patients receiving 2nd (29), 3rd (12), 4th (1) and 5th (1) line palliative chemotherapy, at the Department of Oncology, Odense University Hospital, were included in the study between March 9th 2018 and January 22nd 2019.

The mean age was 67.5 ± 7.8 years and the majority were male, 31 (65%).

A total of 43 (90%) patients answered the questionnaire regarding treatment expectations prior to the first series treatment. Prior to the second series, 42 (88%) patients answered the same questionnaire. Finally, prior to the third series, 37 (77%) patients answered the questionnaire.

A total of 35 out of 43 possible relatives answered the questionnaire, the majority 26 (74%) being a spouse, 6 (17%) daughters and sons and others, 3 (9%).

TREATMENT EXPECTATIONS

	"Relief of pain"	"Prolongation of life"	"Cure"	"Don't know"
1. series n=43	13 (30%)	34 (79%)	8 (19%)	1 (2%)
2. series n=42	14 (33%)	30 (71%)	11 (26%)	4 (10%)
3. series n=37	14 (38%)	26 (70%)	8 (22%)	1 (3%)
1. series relatives n=35	15 (43%)	25 (71%)	12 (34%)	0 (0%)

CONCLUSION

In accordance with previous international studies, our study shows that there are a large number of patients and relatives that expect that palliative chemotherapy will cure them. This needs to be addressed and focused on during the course of treatment.

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