



Family satisfaction with palliative care in Northeastern Ontario

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ABSTRACT:

Palliative care is an important component of equitable cancer care. The benefits of comprehensive palliative care can include improving patient and family quality of life, satisfaction with care, and possibly survival. Further, it may also reduce the use of potentially aggressive end-of-life care and allow death to occur outside of the acute care setting, which is often the wish of patients and their families. However access to palliative care is not uniform, delivery of care can occur through different models, and family assessed satisfaction with delivered care is often not known. The purpose of this study was to measure, using a standardized and valid quality of life tool (FAMCARE), family or primary caregiver experience with palliative care received.

Over the course of a year (2019) 372 surveys were mailed to the family or primary caregivers of a large retrospective decedent cohort of palliative patients, and these caregivers were invited to participate in study. Participation involved completing a questionnaire which had been previously developed and pretested in this population. The questionnaire asked whether palliative care was received, and assessed care overall, and across a number of important domains including multiple items that measured: information giving, physical patient care, psychosocial care, and availability of care. To date, 118 surveys have been returned. Results from the questionnaire will be presented using descriptive statistics, and will include presentation of the FAMCARE scale results overall and by domain, and across estimated palliative care delivery models. The results of this study will be important for health care providers and policy makers as it will provide important information that can be used to improve the delivery of palliative care in Northeastern Ontario.