

ASSOCIATION AMONG SPIRITUAL PAIN AND END OF LIFE CARE

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AMONG ADVANCED CANCER PATIENTS

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INTRODUCTION

- Spirituality and Religiosity are important considerations as patients with advance cancer (AdCa) approach end of life (EOL)
- High religious coping strategies and low spiritual needs addressed have been related to treatment decisions at the EOL
- Limited literature has explored the role of Spiritual Pain (SP) and its association with aggressive EOL care of patients with advanced cancer.
- Our main objective was to determine the association between SP and receiving aggressive EOL care in (AdCa) patients.

METHODS

- 219 electronic health records of eligible patients were reviewed. This study is a secondary analysis of 3 prior prospective studies evaluating spirituality, religiosity and spiritual pain, and financial distress done in Supportive Care clinic at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.
- Relationship among SP (Pain deep in your soul/being that is not physical; $\geq 1/10$), and Aggressive EOL care defined as one or more of the following criteria (chemotherapy within 14 days prior to death, had ≥ 2 Emergency (ER) visits, had ≥ 2 hospitalizations and intensive care unit (ICU) admissions within 30 days prior to death, who died in ICU or general medical floor or refused hospice enrollment) was analyzed.

RESULTS

- Out of 219 patients, 169 (77%) had data available on EOL care.
- 129(59%) were females, and 145(66%) were Christian.
- SP was found in 94(45%). Patients with SP underwent more aggressive EOL care (65% v. 35% $p=0.0246$).
- Only 38(66%) patients with SP received spiritual support.
- Advance care planning was done in only 88(59%) of the cohort and it did not differ in patients with or without SP (60% v. 52%).
- Aggressive EOL care was associated with race; African American and Hispanic ($p=.049$) and SP ($p=<0.024$).

Association between Spiritual Pain and Aggressive End of Life (EOL) care

Spiritual Pain	Aggressive EOL Care			P-Value
	Number of Patients (%)			
	Total	Yes	No	
Absent (0/10)	86 (52)	12 (35)	74 (57)	0.024
Present ($\geq 1/10$)	78 (48)	22 (65)	56 (43)	

CONCLUSIONS

- Significant number of AdCa patients expressed SP.
- SP was significantly associated with receipt of aggressive EOL care.
- Aggressive EOL was associated with race; African American and Hispanic and presence of SP.
- Further studies are needed to confirm these findings in other clinical settings

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