

Facilitating patient-oncologist communication in advanced treatment-resistant cancer: development and feasibility testing of a question prompt list (HECTOR)

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Background

Patients' expectations regarding medical information in advanced stages of cancer are still poorly understood in France. Tailoring information to advanced cancer patients is a subtle task. We have developed a question prompt list (QPL), serving as a patient-oncologist communication aid.

Methods



Step 1c. Focus groups

To determine a preliminary QPL content & format in terms of relevance, acceptability and feasibility in clinical practice
To specify clinical implementation modalities

Step 1d. Survey

To revise & draft a QPL final version (V.1)

Step 2. Pilot-testing

To pre-test QPL V.1 : acceptability, feasibility, clinical utility

Step 1b. Patients' assessment & interviews

To identify & prioritize information & support needs, expectations & experience



Initial version

Version to pretest

Preliminary work

Literature review

->To describe communication aids in early advanced cancer

Step 1a. Professionals' interviews

To define clinical setting
To identify communication issues and barriers

*QPL: Question Prompt List

Results

Step 1a, b, 41 questions, covering 5 themes (disease, current treatment, other options, living with cancer, prognosis).

Step 1c, 13 added questions, 2 merged, 5 deleted ; recommendations for clinical use.

Step 1d, 2 questions merged and 6 deleted; total=41 questions; short form (4 questions)

Step 2, 4 oncologists (27% of the target population) took part; QPL was discussed with 20 patients, revealing a positive appraisal.

Conclusions

- Rigorously developed, relevant, concise, acceptable tool
- Sensitive question on prognosis, short QPL version

