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ABSTRACT 137

Title: Preference for quality of life or survival: Results from Survey on Preferences for end-of-life care among Singaporeans

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Abstract:

Background: Singapore is one of the most rapidly aging Asian countries. Yet, very little is known about the preferences of Singaporeans for care at the end of life and how demographic and socio-economic factors relate to these preferences.

Objective: To understand Singaporeans' preferences for quality of life or survival in case of advanced cancer and whether these preferences vary by demographic and socio-economic characteristics.

Methods: Data from the Survey on preferences for end-of-life care among Singaporeans (SPECS), involving interviews with 1500 community dwelling older adults aged >50 years, was used. Preference for life prolonging treatments in case of advanced cancer was assessed using an 8-item scale assessing trade-offs between quality of life and survival.

Results: Using principal component analysis of the 8-item scale, we generated two factors assessing strength of preference for quality of life and survival. All respondents were classified into two groups (those preferring quality of life and those preferring longer survival) based on the factor scores. Logistic regression was then used to predict membership in the two groups based on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents (age, gender, educational status, type of housing, household income, perceived financial adequacy, ethnicity, religiosity, current health status, living arrangement, presence of Medisave and any other health insurance, previous or current experience with caregiving).

Conclusion: The findings provide an insight into Singaporeans' preferences for care at the end of life.