The Use of a Brief Five-Item Measure of Family Satisfaction as a Critical Quality Indicator in Advanced Cancer Care (FR467-B)

Katherine Ornstein, MPH, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY
Vivian Yeh, PhD, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY
Joan Penrod, PhD, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY
R. Sean Morrison, MD FAAHPM, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY
Diane Meier, MD FACP FAAHPM, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY

Objectives

- Review psychometric properties of a brief scale to assess family satisfaction with advanced cancer care.
- Describe current guidelines/practices for assessment of family satisfaction with care for advanced illness.

Original Research Background: Family satisfaction is a critical indicator of quality of care for patients with advanced illness that is commonly measured in palliative care research. Yet the systematic assessment of family satisfaction as a quality indicator is rarely practiced despite an emphasis on the importance of family input and support for caregivers in advanced care for those with cancer and other serious illnesses. Measurement burden may be one barrier to widespread use of family satisfaction measures.

Research Objectives: To use a brief measure of family satisfaction to assess differences across sites.

Methods: We used data from the Palliative Care for Cancer Patients (PC4C) study, a multisite observational study of the effect of inpatient palliative care on patient health outcomes and health service use among patients with advanced cancer. Using Item Response Theory (IRT), we developed a shortened five-item version on the FAMCARE scale to measure family satisfaction with care. We used multivariate regression analysis to detect significant differences across five treatment sites controlling for patient demographics, cancer type, family relationship to patient, and use of inpatient palliative care.

Results: Family satisfaction data were available on 1,979 patients. The most common cancer type was gastrointestinal (28%) followed by lung (13%). Mean FAMCARE-5 score across sites ranged from 5.54-6.89 out of a possible score of 10 (highest level of satisfaction). Family members of patients at site five (n=783) were significantly (p<.01) less satisfied with their care than family members at other care sites.

Conclusions: Variability in family satisfaction with advanced cancer care across sites can be detected using a brief five-item questionnaire.

Implications for Research, Policy, or Practice: The development of less lengthy and burdensome measures for monitoring family satisfaction among patients with serious illness can facilitate the routine assessment of family satisfaction to maintain and promote high quality care across care settings.