What Improves Quality of Life for Seriously-Ill Patients and Their Caregivers? From Observation to Intervention to Dissemination (SA510-B)

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Objectives

- Discuss approaches to defining, measuring, and intervening in quality of life for patients and families.
- Recognize that social, psychological, and spiritual aspects of quality of life have implications for how and who is best suited for intervention.
- Explore approaches to quality-of-life concerns, lessons learned, and implications for disseminating strategies to improve by reviewing data from different studies and control trials.

A primary goal of palliative care is to decrease suffering and increase quality of life. Yet defining what constitutes quality of life, measuring it, and intervening to improve it remain ongoing challenges for the field. The purpose of this presentation is to review progress in each of these three steps of definition, measurement, and intervention in patient and caregiver quality of life, with particular attention to the role of psychological, social, and spiritual care’s relationships to quality of life. While the National Consensus Project guidelines and National Quality Forum preferred practices dictate care in each of these three realms, much work is needed to understand specifically how psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of care relate to quality of life and intersect and are distinct in the setting of serious illness. Understanding these relationships has implication for how to intervene and which interdisciplinary team members may be best suited for intervention. Data from cross-sectional and longitudinal observational and validation studies as well as findings from randomized controlled trials of quality-of-life interventions will be used to explore approaches to quality-of-life concerns, lessons learned, and implications for disseminating strategies to improve care.