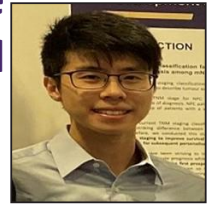


Integrated palliative care in Hong Kong: A 10-year territory-wide review of its impacts on end-of-life care and survival of advanced cancer patients

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Abstract

Background: Integrated palliative care (PC) in oncology service has been widely implemented in Hong Kong since 2006. We aimed to investigate its impact on end-of-life outcomes, survival of patients and utilization of healthcare resources over the past decade.

Methods: Cancer deaths of 43 public hospitals of Hong Kong were screened. We reviewed the electronic patient records of 2800 cancer deaths randomly selected from 4 periods (2006, 2009, 2012, 2015). Propensity score matching (PSM) analysis was performed to compare the overall survival of patients.

Results: PC provision was associated with improved end-of-life outcomes including more prescription of strong opioids, fewer CPR and ICU admissions, less futile chemotherapy usage in the terminal period (all $P < 0.001$). PSM analysis showed the median overall survival (OS) in patients who received palliative service (5.10 months, 95% CI 4.52-5.68 months) was significantly longer than those who did not (1.96 months, 95% CI 1.66-2.27 months). Patients in the PC group had more specialist clinic visits ($P < .001$) and longer hospital stay ($P < .001$) in the final 6 months of life.

Conclusion: PC has played a role in the remarkable improvement in end-of-life outcomes and survival of cancer patients in Hong Kong. However, the current service model relied heavily on hospital resources. Future work is needed to strengthen community care.

Biography:

Sik-Kwan Chan had attended The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) for his public health bachelor degree. After being a researcher in the department of clinical oncology at the University of Hong Kong (HKU), he pursued his studies in PhD in clinical oncology at his alma mater. His research interests include cancer survivorship, palliative care, integrative medicine, epidemiology, big data and artificial intelligence. He has published numerous peer-review journals and presented in overseas conferences.



4th International Conference on Palliative Care and Gerontology | Webinar, April 26, 2021

Citation: Sik-Kwan Chan, *Integrated palliative care in Hong Kong: A 10-year territory-wide review of its impacts on end-of-life care and survival of advanced cancer patients*, Palliative Care 2021, 4th International Conference on Palliative Care and Gerontology, Webinar, April 26, 2021