

2<sup>nd</sup> Global Congress on

# Hospice & Palliative Care

September 29-30, 2016 Toronto, Canada

## THE VIEWS OF PATIENTS WITH BRAIN CANCER TOWARDS PALLIATIVE CARE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

**Megan Vierhout<sup>a</sup>, Maureen Daniels<sup>b</sup>, Paolo Mazzotta<sup>c</sup>, Warren Mason<sup>b</sup> and Mark Bernstein<sup>a,c</sup>**<sup>a</sup>Toronto Western Hospital, Canada<sup>b</sup>Princess Margaret Cancer Center, Canada<sup>c</sup>University of Toronto, Canada

Palliative care is a specialty aimed at providing optimal care to patients with life-threatening conditions and has been shown to improve length of survival and quality of life, especially when introduced early. It can be administered in a hospital, a hospice (i.e. palliative care unit) or in a home-based setting. In this study the perceptions and attitudes regarding palliative care of patients with brain cancer were explored using qualitative research methodology. Convenience sampling was used to accrue patients at the Brain Tumor Clinic at Princess Margaret Cancer Center, University Health Network and 35 semi-structured interviews were conducted over a four-month period. Interviews were audiotaped and transcribed, and the data were subjected to thematic analysis. Seven overarching themes emerged from the data: 1) Patients prefer to be educated about palliative care as an option early in their illness, even if they are fearful of it; 2) there is a pre-conceived idea that palliative care is directly linked to active dying, and this generates fear in some patients; 3) patients are open to palliative care if they believe it will not diminish optimism; 4) patients would prefer to receive palliative care in the home; 5) increased time with caregivers and family are the main appeals of home care; 6) patients believe palliative care can contribute to their emotional well-being; 7) patients express dissatisfaction with brief and superficial interactions with health care providers. Overall, when educated on the true meaning of palliative care, most patients express interest in accessing palliative care services.

### Biography

Megan Vierhout is a fourth year Honors Life Science undergraduate student at McMaster University and a research student at Toronto Western Hospital, working under Mark Bernstein. She has been a volunteer in various palliative care settings, including Hamilton Health Sciences St. Peter's Hospital and St. Peter's Residence at Chedoke since 2013. She is currently interested in qualitative research, and her past research focuses have included palliative care for brain cancer patients and the immunological gut-brain axis.

vierhom@mcmaster.ca

### Notes: