



Impact of Advance Care Planning and End-of-Life Conversations on Cancer Patients: An Integrative Literature Review

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Background

- Cancer is the leading cause of death worldwide, accounting for nearly 10 million deaths in 2020 (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). It is the second leading cause of death in United States.
- Expected rise in new cancer cases per year is 29.5 million by the year 2040 with an estimated death of 16.4 million people due to cancer (National Cancer Institute, 2021).
- Advance Care Planning (ACP) and end-of-life (EOL) conversations play a critical role in cancer patients' awareness about their disease and prognosis and can help them in making informed decisions based on their values, goals, and preferences.

Purpose

To explore the literature and understand the impact of ACP and EOL conversations on cancer patients, their experience, and related preferences for care

Methodology

Data Bases

CINAHAL, PubMed, MEDLINE-Ovid and MEDLINE full text

Mesh Headings

Advance Care Planning AND Cancer patients AND Experience
End of life AND Advance Care Planning
Patient Experience AND Cancer AND Advance Care Planning
End of life AND Oncology

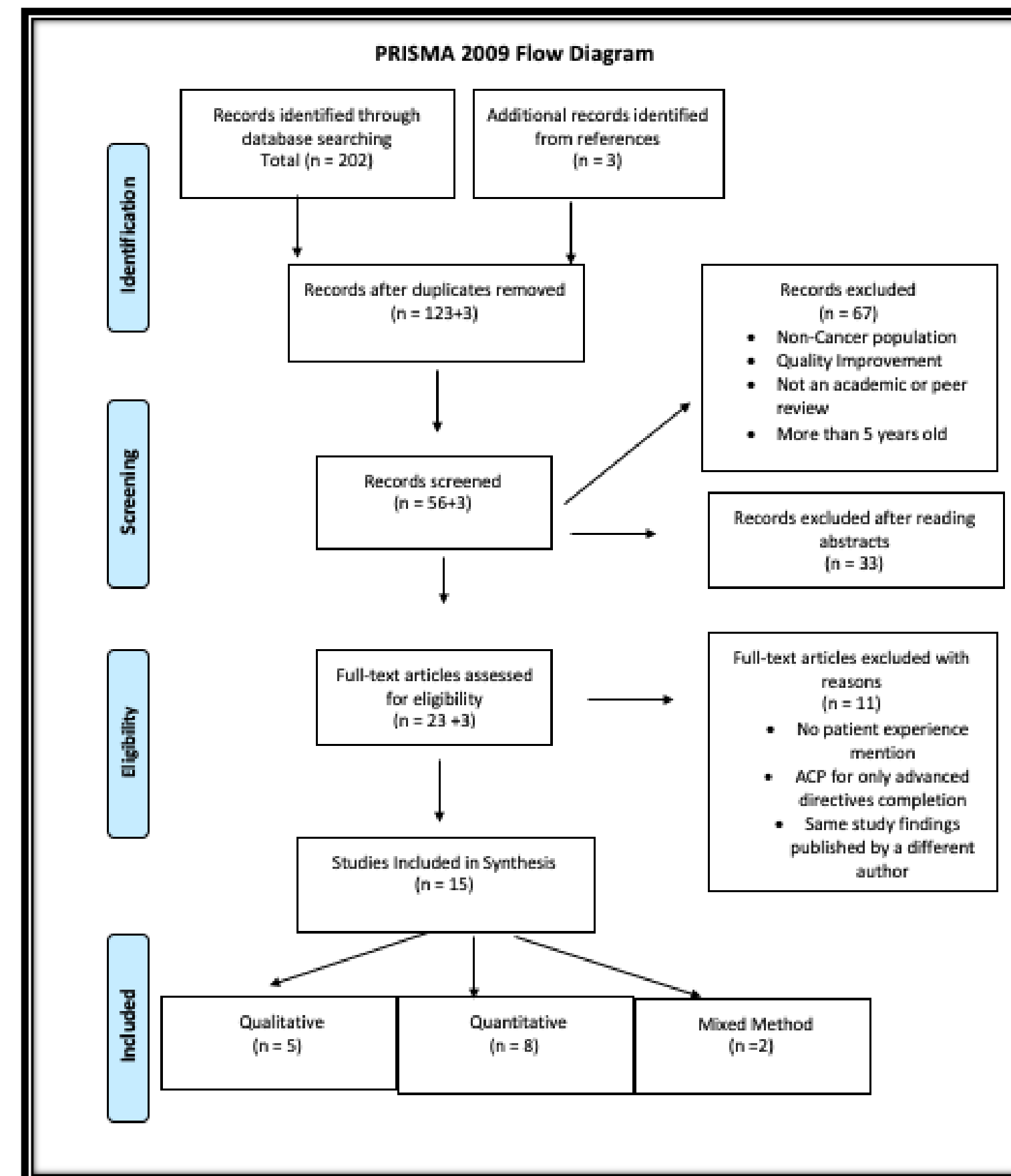
Research Questions

1. What is the impact of ACP and EOL conversations on cancer patients?
2. What is the preference of cancer patients regarding ACP and EOL conversations?
3. Can ACP and EOL conversations with cancer patients provide information on prognosis and assist them in articulating their EOL care preferences?

Results

- 202 articles originally identified
- 15 included in final review
 - Randomized Control Trial (n=4)
 - Non-Randomized control trial (n=2)
 - Descriptive Studies (n=2)
 - Qualitative Studies (n=5)
 - Mixed Method studies (n=2)

Literature Search



Literature Synthesis

Cancer patients' experiences

- Prognostic Awareness
- Decision Making

The result from the studies showed that cancer patients had positive experience with ACP and EOL conversations. There was decreased symptoms of anxiety and depression, and improved prognostic awareness associated with understanding of future health care which enhanced their decision making related to EOL care preferences based on their values. (Agarwal et al., 2020; Bernacki et al., 2019; Brohard, 2017; Epstein et al., 2018; Kumar et al., 2020; Michael et al., 2015; Paladino et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2019).

Cancer patients' propositions

- Timings of ACP discussions
- Support during ACP and/or EOL conversations

Patients & family members suggested that the ACP should occur early and shortly after the diagnosis of cancer. Additionally, patients proposed a need for emotional support during these conversations. (Agarwal et al., 2020; Bernacki et al., 2019; Brohard, 2017; Epstein et al., 2018; Kumar et al., 2020; Michael et al., 2015; Paladino et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2019; Stegmann et al., 2020).

Cancer patients' perceived outcomes

- Patient-provider relationship
- Goal Concordant care

The studies conducted by Agarwal et al (2020), Kumar et al (2020) and Toguri et al (2020) had the similar findings as regards to the development of patient provider relationship as demonstrated from the results of study by Michael et al., 2015. Unfortunately, there was a conflicting evidence related to goal concordance care from the study conducted in Korea by Yoo et al (2020).

Clinical Implications

Nurse (RNs and APRNs) are integral part of the health care team and can initiate the ACP discussion. They can also help to alleviate the barriers in the initiation of these important discussion with patients and their family, especially who have been diagnosed with terminal illness like cancer.

Conclusion

Findings from this literature review emphasizes the importance of ACP and EOL conversations; their Impact on cancer patients experience. Strategies are needed which incorporates cancer patients experience, their propositions and preferences for efficient, and effective patient- centered end-of-life care

Level of Evidence

