

Marie Curie Cancer Care Research Programme - Project Grant

Project details
<p>Dr Christine Campbell and Professor Scott Murray (joint PIs), University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Identifying patients who would benefit from palliative care, irrespective of diagnosis: the development and feasibility testing of a primary care-based intervention</p> <p>Duration of project: 24 months Start date: 01/05/2012 (TBC) Budget: £117k</p>

Abstract
<p>Background People's experience of care at the end of life varies greatly by diagnosis. Recognising when patients with non-malignant illness need supportive and palliative care is a prerequisite for effective and equitable end of life care for this disadvantaged group. Primary care teams are well placed to use their increasingly sophisticated computerised databases and search facilities to identify and consider all such patients for palliative care based on pragmatic clinical and other criteria.</p> <p>Aims To develop and test a primary-care based intervention to identify patients who might benefit from earlier supportive and palliative care.</p> <p>Methods We will develop a two-stage identification process: 1) Development and running of GP computer searches to identify patients with supportive and palliative care needs using criteria in the refined SPICT, as recorded in patient electronic records (VISION and EMIS): Patients will be purposively selected across the cancer, organ failure and frailty trajectories; 2) Refinement of the shortlist through discussion of the search results at Practice Team Meetings. We will carry out interviews with health professionals and focus groups with patients and carers.</p> <p>We will then test the feasibility of implementation of the intervention in six general practices with a range of socio-demographic characteristics. The intervention will be implemented over four months in each practice, and will include 1) running the searches once a month 2) discussion of the search-generated lists at practice team meetings. Further qualitative work with staff and patients will be carried out. The changes in the numbers of patients on the Palliative Care Register on a month-by-month basis will be recorded: for those on the PCR, the number of OOH calls, and unplanned Hospital admissions will also be recorded.</p> <p>How the results of this research will be used The results will inform the design of a future randomised controlled study to assess the impact of early supportive and palliative care for people with cancer and non-malignant illnesses. This intervention if found useful has great potential for widespread applicability.</p>