

## Marie Curie Cancer Care Research Programme - Project Grant

Project details
<p><b>Dr Martin Dempster</b>, Queen's University Belfast</p> <p><b>Quality Indicators for Palliative Care Day Services</b></p> <p>Duration of project: 22 months Start date: 01/02/2015 Budget: £88,307.72</p>

Abstract
<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Service users attending Palliative Care Day Services (PCDS) have reported that these services have a positive impact on their Quality of Life (QoL), but rigorous research evidence is lacking. This inconsistency can be attributed to a problem of measurement – instruments used to assess Health Related Quality of Life (HRQoL) may not encapsulate domains of life most valued by service users. The individualised approach to HRQoL assessment provides a means of assessing QoL that prioritises domains most valued by each individual, whilst still producing quantifiable evidence. Head-to-head comparisons are necessary to decide which instruments are most appropriate when evaluating the impact of PCDS on users' QoL. Whilst outcome assessments (such as QoL) are an important means of assessing quality of care, measures of process and structural elements of care should also be assessed. There is little consensus about how to comprehensively assess the quality of care provided by PCDS and no existing Quality Indicators (QIs) for these services. The development of QIs would provide service planners and commissioners with a means of defining, measuring and comparing the quality of care, and facilitating effective acquirement and use of resources.</p> <p><b>Aims</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the most appropriate and acceptable method of assessing the impact of PCDS on the QoL of users</li> <li>2. Develop a set of QIs for the assessment of all aspects of quality of care for PCDS</li> <li>3. Develop and implement a toolkit for assessment of QIs in PCDS</li> </ol> <p><b>Methods</b></p> <p>Work package 1 will involve the recruitment of 150 day service patients who will complete five HRQoL instruments at two time points with a 3 week interval, enabling analysis of the psychometric properties and acceptability of each instrument within the PCDS population. Work package 2 will employ the RAND/UCLA method to develop a set of QIs for use in PCDS – utilising best available evidence and expert opinion of both professionals and service users. Work package 3 will assess the use of these indicators in the clinical environment at sites across the UK.</p> <p><b>How the results of this research will be used</b></p> <p>A comprehensive toolkit for the assessment of QIs in PCDS will be produced. With the assistance of organisations involved in its development, the toolkit will be promoted to service providers across the UK. The identification of a 'best practice' approach to assessment of QoL will help to facilitate full economic evaluations of PCDS.</p>