

Attitudes and practices among Swiss nephrologists regarding end-of-life care: is there a change in the past 12 years? A national survey

BACKGROUND

End of life care for dialysis patients has become an important issue in the last years. Beside scientific studies a number of international and national guidelines have been published with the aim to help decision making for starting or withdrawing dialysis (1-4). However little is known regarding attitudes. However little is known regarding attitudes and practice of nephrologists in end-of-life care, as well as about needs for continuous medical education on this topic in nephrology

AIM

In 2004 a survey was performed among Swiss nephrologists regarding end of life care. With the present survey we would like to analyze if attitudes and practice regarding end-of-life has changed in the last 12 years in Switzerland (comparison between survey in 2004 and in 2016).

METHODS

Participants:

2004: All active members of the Swiss society of Nephrology were invited to participate in the survey on a paper version.

2016: All active members of the Swiss Society of Nephrology will be invited to participate in the survey by online questionnaire.

Instrument:

Adapted questionnaire (4): Questionnaire about End-of-life issues in end-stage renal failure.

The survey consists of 118 questions in eight sections:

- A. education and training in end-of-life care
- B. current practice in end-of-life care
- C. perceived barriers to the delivery of end-of-life care
- D. decision making in end-of-life care
- E. vignettes about the management of patients at the end of life (developed together with Swiss nephrologists, as close as possible to everyday reality)
- F. individual experiences with terminal patients
- G. role of the Swiss Society of Nephrology in improving end-of-life care
- H. demographics and practice characteristics.

PERSPECTIVE

In 2004 a survey was performed among all active Swiss nephrologists regarding end-of-life care. The collected data were not published yet. The same questionnaire will be sent once more in 2016. The collected data of 2004 and 2016 will be evaluated and compared.

1. *Renal Physician Association, American Society of Nephrology: Shared Decision making in the Appropriate Initiation of and withdrawal from Dialysis. RPA and ASN, Washington DC 2000*
2. *Medizin-ethische Richtlinien SAMW: Betreuung von Patientinnen und Patienten am Lebensende, 2004 und Palliative Care 2009, Anpassung beide Richtlinien an Erwachsenenschutzgesetz 2013*
3. *Choosing Wisely, Swiss Society of Nephrology 2016*
4. *Attitudes and practices among pediatric oncologists regarding end-of life care: results of the 1998 American Society of Clinical Oncology Survey, Journal of Clinical Oncology, 19, 2001, 205-212*