

# How do patients report prognostic awareness using different questions.

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## BACKGROUND

Patients' understanding of cancer diagnosis and prognosis is perceived as an essential condition for the shared decision-making process. Accuracy in prognostic awareness (PA) is usually measured by questions focused on aims of treatment, life expectancy or curability of illness. **This study is focused on how patients report their PA using different questions.**

## METHODS

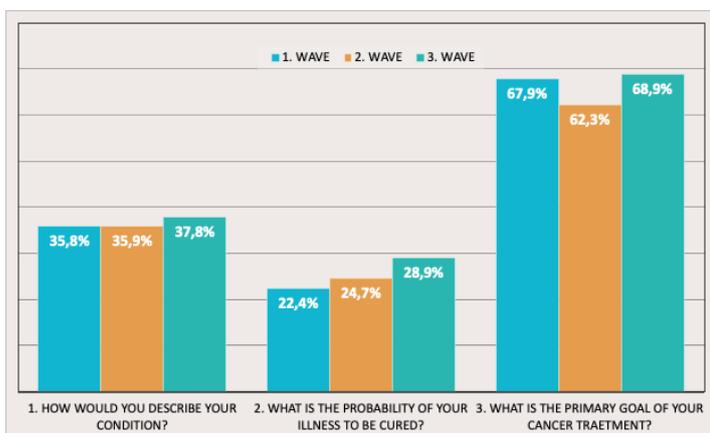
This survey was longitudinal cohort study (data were collected during 9 months in 3 waves) with cancer patients (n=137). Inclusion criteria: advanced cancer, age 18+ and cognitive ability to participate at the beginning of the study. Eligible patients were chosen by their physicians using surprise questions for 1 year. Patients were asked to answer 3 different questions which can be used to measure PA and their answers were dichotomized considering their accuracy:

- 1. How would you describe your condition? Patients who answered: "I am seriously and terminally ill" were considered as prognostically aware.**
- 2. What is the probability of your illness to be cured (0-100 %)? As accurate probability was found 0-10 %.**
- 3. What is the primary goal of your cancer treatment? Patients who answered "to extend my life as long as possible" or "to lessen suffering" were considered as prognostically aware.**

Distribution of answers and differences between them were observed cross-sectionally and longitudinally by using descriptive statistics. Correlations between variables were analysed by Cramer's V and coefficient eta. Chi-square and adjusted residual were used when appropriate.

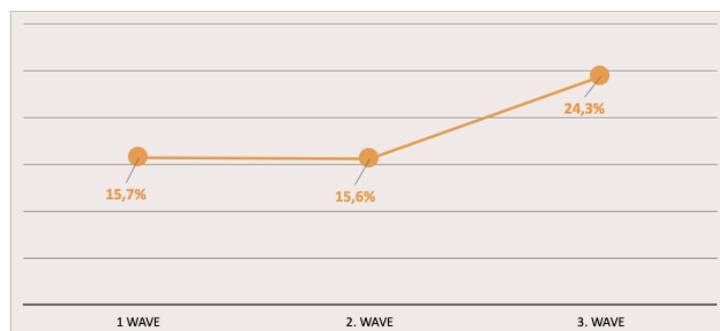
## RESULTS

Analysis found differences between questions used for measurement of PA. 36.4 % of patients on average report accurate PA in 1st question, 25.3 % in 2nd question and 66.4 % in 3rd question.



## DISCUSSION

**This study suggests that PA has multiple dimensions and although patients have accurate PA in some aspects of it, they may still struggle with other aspects of PA and their expectations could remain unrealistic.** Practitioners who are responsible for providing health information should be aware of this discrepancy and take it into account during health care planning.



**Number of patients who had accurate PA in all 3 question has increased from 15.7 % in 1st wave to 24.3 % in 3rd wave.** In 2nd question on probability of cure analysis shows there is significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ) among respondents who ranked probability of cure on average of 30 %, which was considered as inaccurate PA and who have accurate PA in the rest of analyzed questions.