

Abstract:

Being aware of the severity of their medical condition is a key precondition for patients with advanced disease to be involved in advance care planning. This thesis aims to describe the phenomenon of prognostic awareness and identify factors that are related to prognostic awareness in patients with advanced cancer. The author of this dissertation thesis participated in a three-year project, which was supported by the Czech Science Foundation (IMPAC study, grant number 17-26722Y), which aims to map the preferences of patients with advanced disease and further describe factors related to prognostic awareness and assess its stability over time. The secondary goal was also to describe how patients with a serious diagnosis and their loved ones evaluate their participation in a research study.

In the introductory chapter of this thesis, we describe the concept of prognostic awareness, methods of measuring it and the goals of this work. The dissertation thesis includes 4 publications that are focused on this topic and 1 publication that responds to the secondary goal of this dissertation thesis. The publications are followed by a discussion in which we deal with all our findings in the context of the latest evidence available on this topic.

Our results prove that prognostic awareness is a complex phenomenon and identify several factors that can influence it. In addition, we have also shown that the level of prognostic awareness does not change over time and therefore, it is probably a stable phenomenon. Our data also showed that patients and their loved ones do not mind participating in the research study, with almost half of them even considering it an interesting experience. Our results prove that when delivering bad news, it is necessary to know the preferences and wishes of the patient and apply an individual approach.