

Race and the Source of Life Expectancy Estimates

An examination of the source of advanced cancer patients' information about their prognosis and racial disparities in the accuracy of patients' life expectancy estimates

The Study



Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of 229 patients: 31 black patients and 198 white patients. Coping With Cancer was an NCI funded prospective, longitudinal, multisite study of terminally ill cancer patients followed until the end of life.

Results

Source of Information

43.67%

of the sample had Life Expectancy Estimates that differed from actual survival by more than 2 years

27.95%

of the sample had Life Expectancy Estimates that differed from actual survival by more than 5 years



70.7%

Reported that they based their Life Expectancy Estimates on personal beliefs.

81.7%

Less than one-fifth of the total sample (18.3%) reported that a medical provider was the source of their Life Expectancy Estimate.



2.5 X

Patients who reported that their medical provider was the source of their Life Expectancy Estimate were almost 2.5 times more likely to have an accurate Life Expectancy Estimate than patients who did not rely on a medical provider.



Racial Disparity



21.2%

vs.



0.0%

42 white patients (21.2% of white patients & 18.3% of the sample) based their Life expectancy estimates on a medical provider.

None of the black patients reported that a medical provider was the source of their Life Expectancy Estimate



INSIGHT:

Medical providers are not the source of information for Life Expectancy Estimates for most advanced cancer patients & especially for black patients in this study. Ultimately, this could contribute to why the majority of advanced cancer patients have an inaccurate understanding of their life expectancy.

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Weill Cornell Medicine
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By The Numbers

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Source:

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By: