

# Evaluation of provincial initiatives in palliative care: a baseline assessment of pre-implementation patient perspectives

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## Background

- Early advanced care planning (ACP) conversations show improved patient outcomes. However, content and timing of these end of life discussions have been variable.
- Based on a recent needs assessment from renal care providers, the BC Integrated Palliative Nephrology Working Group has implemented a multipronged approach to improve palliative care in nephrology.
- This large-scale project requires systematic evaluation to demonstrate its efficacy

## Objectives

- To assess baseline experiences and perspectives on ACP in patients with advanced renal disease across 5 Health Authorities (HAs) in BC.

## Methods

- Pre-implementation telephone interviews (~15 minutes each) were conducted with 30 randomly selected patients, 6 from each provincial HA (Table 1).
- The interview was designed based on a validated questionnaire (Figure 1) to audit ACP (Heyland *et al.* 2012).
- Interviews were analyzed quantitatively for patients' involvement in ACP and qualitatively for common themes.
- This assessment will be repeated in 1 year post-implementation to evaluate improvements to the palliative care approach.

## Outcomes

- Majority of patients interviewed have advanced directives (Figure 2A); this is more common in patients on dialysis than in patients with CKD (Figure 2C).
- Only 30% of patients had detailed discussions with their health providers about life-sustaining therapy or palliation in case of a life-threatening condition; this varied across HAs.
- While most patients did not find ACP discussions to be difficult, they would prefer if providers initiated discussion at multiple time points and had more time to provide information.

## Bibliography

Heyland, D. K., Dodek, P., Lamontagne, F., You, J. J., Barwich, D., Tayler, C., ... & Enns, B. (2012). The development and validation of a questionnaire to audit advance care planning (ACP). *BMJ supportive & palliative care*, 2(2), 175-176.

## Questions? Please contact:

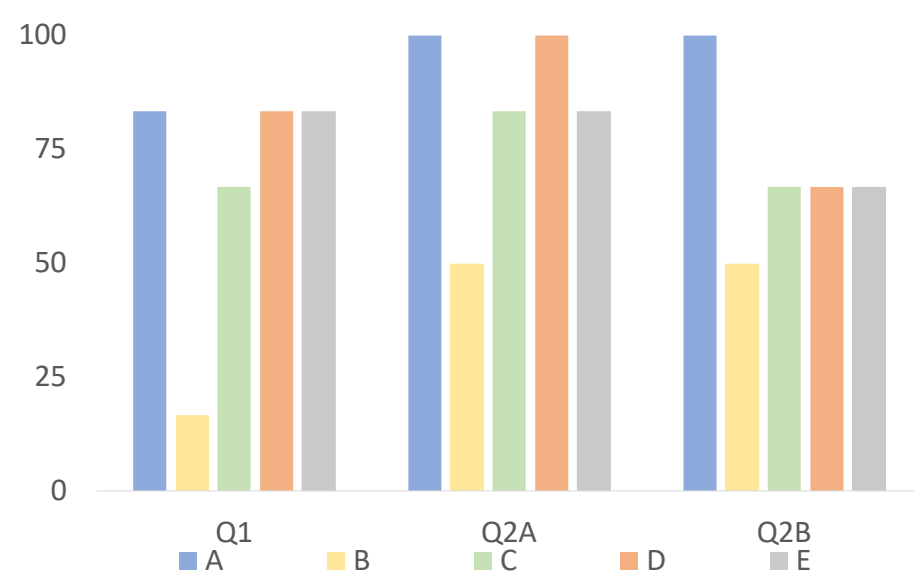
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**Table 1. Patient Demographics**

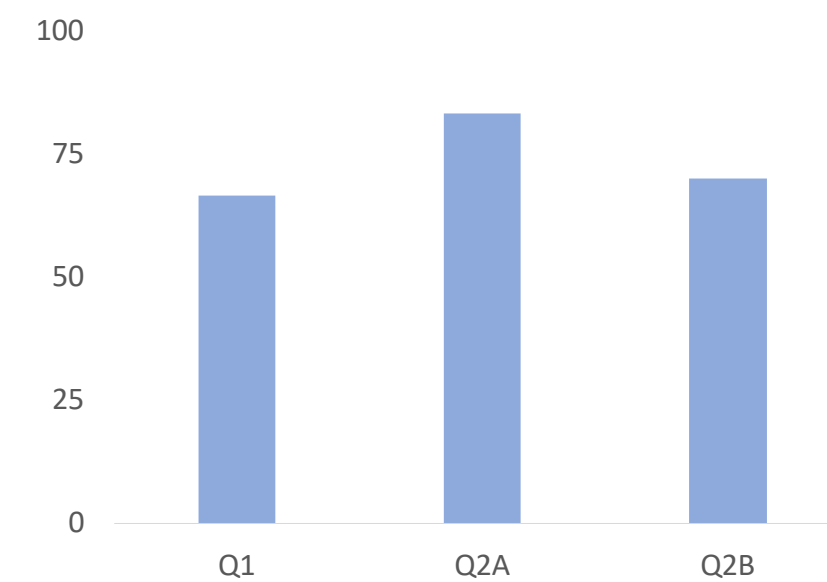
	A	B	C	D	E	All Sites
<b>Age</b>	73.50	84.33	67.83	76.17	75.00	75.37
<b>Time since Dialysis initiation (months)</b>	43.5	46.25	20	63.25	17.5	38.10
<b>Gender (% male)</b>	66.67	50.00	50.00	66.67	66.67	60.00
<b>Race (% Caucasian)</b>	100.00	50.00	100.00	83.33	100.00	86.67

**Q1:** Do you have an advanced care directive or living will?  
**Q2A:** Have you thought about whether you would/wouldn't want life-sustaining treatments in case your physical health deteriorated?  
**Q2B:** Have you discussed your wishes with anyone?  
**Q5:** Has a doctor/health professional discussed palliative/spiritual care that might be helpful if you had a life-threatening condition?  
**Q6:** Has a doctor or other member of health care team provided information about supportive care services such as palliative and spiritual that may be helpful if you had a life-threatening illness?  
**Q7:** Has a doctor asked what is important to you as you consider health care decisions at this stage of your life?  
**Q8:** Has a doctor talked to you about the benefits and burdens of life sustaining medical treatments?

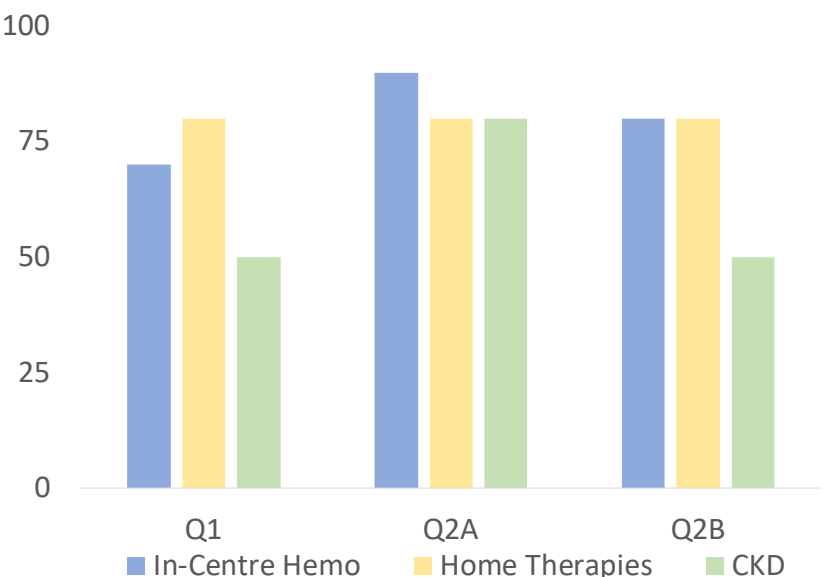
**Figure 1. Selected Questions from Validated Questionnaire.**



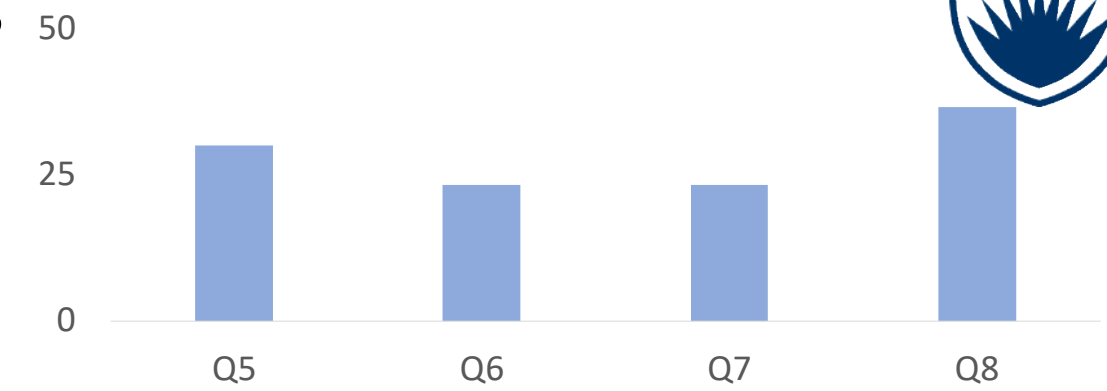
**Figure 2B. % of Patients who reported having advanced directives (Q1), considered treatment plans (Q2A), and had ACP discussions (Q2B) stratified by HAs A-E.**



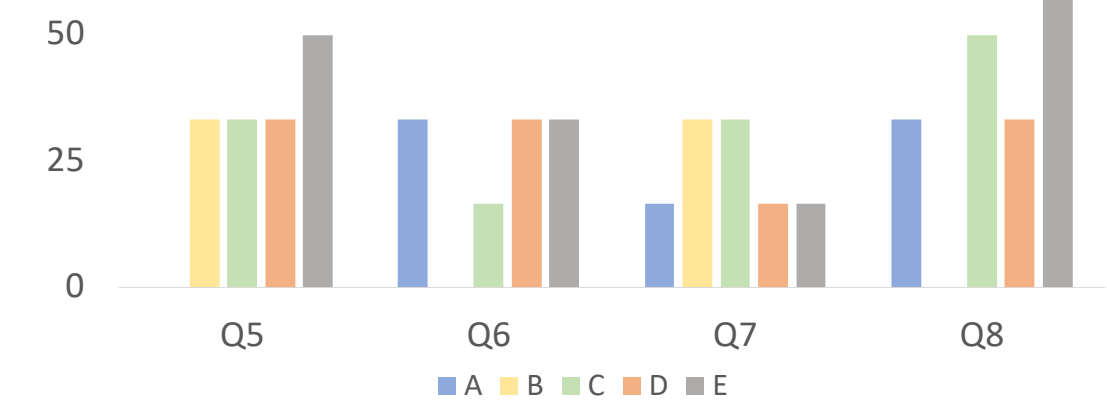
**Figure 2A. % of Patients who reported having advanced directives (Q1), considered treatment plans (Q2A), and had ACP Discussions (Q2B) across all HAs.**



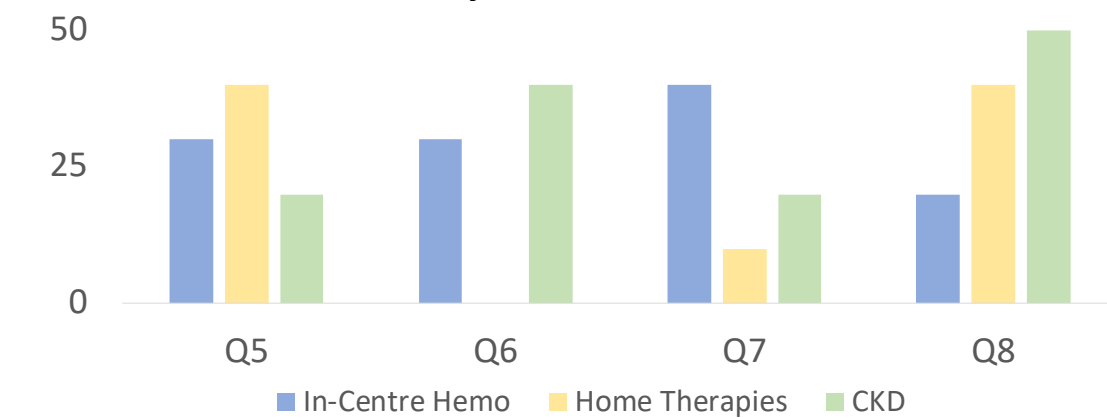
**Figure 2C. % of Patients who reported having advanced directives (Q1), considered treatment plans (Q2A), and had ACP discussions (Q2B) stratified by dialysis modality.**



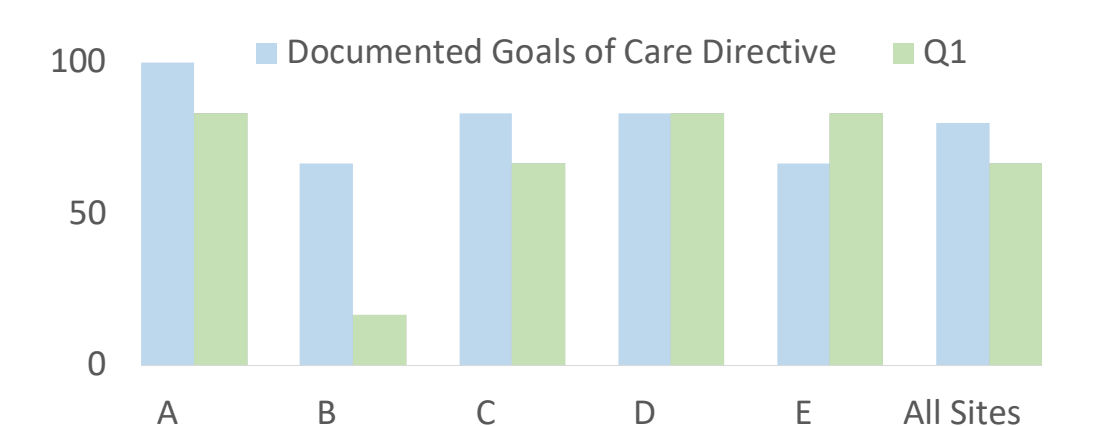
**Figure 3A. % of patients reporting ACP discussions with doctors across all HAs.**



**Figure 3B. % of patients reporting ACP discussions with doctors stratified by HAs A-E.**



**Figure 3C. % of patients reporting ACP discussions with doctors stratified by dialysis modality.**



**Figure 4. % of patients reported having ACP Directives (Q1) compared to Goals of Care Directive documented in patient chart.**

## Conclusion

- This pre-implementation baseline assessment informs that there is room for improvement in the quality and timing of ACP discussions with renal patients across all BC HAs.
- Evaluation of these components in 1 year post-provincial palliative care initiative implementation will guide further quality improvement initiatives.

## Acknowledgements

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