

Representations of medicines and therapeutical transitions in palliative treatment of cancer : stages perceived by patients aged 70 and over in the illness trajectory

Following two previous HES studies carried out in partnership with the Oncology Department of the canton Valais , this research aims at investigating subjective experiences of changes in chemotherapy, from oral to intravenous forms or vice versa. Our objective is to understand the experience of ill persons aged 70 and over, who have cancer and receive a palliative treatment in an oncology unit, which means that there is no hope for a cure but a hope of treatment and thus a hope of prolonging life, reducing symptoms, or improving the quality of life. While these changes in drugs significantly alter the relationship with oneself, others and the management of everyday life, how are these medicines understood and interpreted by the people involved? Are they associated with specific representations when one has cancer, is old and in a palliative situation? What we will focus on in this research will not be the type of cancer nor a type of medicine in particular, but the patients' perception of the illness trajectory and the links that are made or not with the medicines prescribed.

Research team

Rose-Anna Foley, main applicant,
HESAV
Annick Anchisi, other applicant, HESAV
Sandro Anchisi, main applicant, hôpital
du Valais Sion
Claire Ansermet, research assistant,
HESAV

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