



Hmong Elders' Awareness and use of Hospice Care: Motivating Factors and Barriers

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MAJOR FINDINGS

- Twenty-five percent of Hmong Shamanists would consider using hospice care at end of life (EOL), compared to 75% of Hmong Christians
- Hmong elders have concerns about language, understanding the Hmong culture, food preferences, and a lack of diverse staff when it comes to using hospice

“This is something that is important for the Hmong, we still do not know much about this. Because, because we have not really had this experience. But, currently, we believe that his is something good for us because we know that we will die so why do we prevent them from helping us?” (Hmong elder)

Background

- Hmong recruited by U.S. CIA to fight Communist regime in Laos during Vietnam War
- 1975 first Hmong refugees arrived in U.S. per prior agreement with CIA
- Now 260,000 Hmong in U.S.
- Bring traditional (EOL) beliefs and rituals, and face challenges in practicing these
- U.S. EOL providers lack knowledge of these beliefs and rituals
- Hmong patients struggle to find culturally accepting care with hospice
- Hospice and Hmong community have faced challenges in understanding each other's end of life care philosophy
- Currently, little research done on this topic and without more knowledge, it can be difficult to provide culturally appropriate services

Data and Sample

- 20 Hmong participants: elders and not terminal
- Face-to-face qualitative interviews
- Conducted in English or Hmong language
- Mean age 66
- 65% Shamanists & 35% Christians
- Conventional Content Thematic Analysis used

Results

Hmong Elders' Hospice Awareness

- Hmong Shamanist Elders
 - 66% have heard of hospice
 - 33% have not heard of hospice
- Hmong Christian Elders
 - 75% have heard of hospice
 - 25% have not heard of hospice

Hmong Elders' Hospice Knowledge

- Hospice is a resting place with no more treatment
- Hospice is a way to lessen medical bills at end of life
- Hospice provides services and can be flexible

Results, cont.

Hmong Shamanist's Use of Hospice

- 25% would use hospice
 - If they see how hospice can help
 - If children cannot provide the care
- 75% would not use hospice
 - Uncertain of how hospice will help
 - Expect children to provide the care
 - Language Barrier
 - Depends on children's decisions

Hmong Christians' Use of Hospice

- 75% would use hospice
 - Having no more options
 - Professional care from hospice staff
- 25% would NOT use hospice
 - Hospice is against Hmong traditions
 - Desire to be at home with family

Hmong Tradition for Hospice to Honor

- Hospice should honor culturally appropriate food/rituals
- Hospice should honor collectivism
- Hospice should honor that Hmong patients have many visitors

Barriers to Hmong Using Hospice

- Misunderstanding from both communities about how to work together
- Uncertain of hospice purposes

Results, cont.

Facilitators to Hmong using Hospice

- Having Hmong staff on board and flexibility with the Hmong culture
- Trust building from hospice community
- Further education on hospice care

Implications

- Hospice agencies and Hmong health leaders determine cultural needs in provision of hospice care
- Future research needed on ability of hospice providers to honor the more traditional beliefs and rituals

Limitations

- Small sample size
- Sample not generalizable
- Self-selection likely: traditional Hmong elders tend to believe speaking of EOL is taboo
- Study conducted in one geographic area

