

Journal Watch – Prognosis - January 2018

Article:

Predicting prognosis in patients with advanced cancer: A prospective study

Palliat Med. 2018 Feb;32(2):413-416. doi: 10.1177/0269216317705788. Epub 2017 May 10.

Article link: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269216317705788>

Review:

Strengths: Prospective design. Used validated tools. Relevant population of patients with characteristics similar to the ones we see.

Weaknesses: Convenience sampling introduces significant selection bias. Low number of patients. Other validated scores weren't studied. Origin of definition for "adequate" and "severe" categories unexplained.

Relevance to Palliative Care: Accurate prognostication is vital for framing the journey that patients will face for their providers (and the patients when they want to know) and has important implications for treatment decisions and disposition. This attempts to describe the abilities of different providers and tools and provides further confirmation that we still have more work to do to refine the process and that we trend towards optimism. Introduces the idea of studying improved prognostication on health systems overall (costs, hospital use, etc).

	Junior Doctor	Palliative Care Physician	PaP	PPI
adequate	10.5%	23.7%	47%	55%
inbetween	34.2%	34.2%	53%	34%
severe	55.3%	42.1%	0%	11%