

Journal Watch – Administration & Palliative Care at Home – May 2018

Article:

Do Patients Want to Die at Home? A Systematic Review of the UK Literature, Focused on Missing Preferences for Place of Death.

Hoare S, Morris ZS, Kelly MP, Kuhn I, Barclay S.

PLoS One. 2015 Nov 10;10(11):e0142723

Article link: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0142723>

Review:

Strengths: Well described systematic review that screened over 1000 articles to find the 58 included papers. The review questions are very topical and of critical importance in the development of palliative and EOL care services.

Weaknesses: The authors acknowledge that basic analysis was used in the simple summary statistics of medians as much of the available evidence was not suitable for methods such as meta-analysis. It is not possible to speculate on the distribution of missing preferences e.g. could be no preference, other locations preferred, or supportive of policy rhetoric.

Relevance to Palliative Care: Recognition of the fact that we do not have good evidence to support the claim that most people want to die at home would better serve the present discussion and perhaps encourage more meaningful research and policy development.