

## **Integrated Palliative Care Outcome Scale:**

### **a brief and user-friendly measure for evaluating palliative care services**

Nowadays, cancer patients are living longer with a higher burden of symptom problems such as pain, fatigue, reduced function and caregiver stress. To meet the supportive and palliative care needs of these patients, innovative models of palliative care service delivery have to be developed and evaluated. This requires the availability of validated and relevant outcomes measures to determine whether these health service models are indeed beneficial for patients. Currently, a suite of multiple measurement tools are employed to evaluate palliative care, depending on the different components of the palliative care intervention being evaluated. This results in a lengthy questionnaire for patient-reported outcomes, which may be a challenge to complete for patients with advanced serious illnesses. There is a need for reliable outcome measures to capture the complex symptoms and concerns of those receiving palliative care.

In this interview, **Dr Grace Yang**, Consultant of Department of Palliative Medicine, National Cancer Centre Singapore, shares about her recent research on validating of the Integrated Palliative care Outcome Scale (IPOS) for global measurement of palliative care outcomes.

#### **Q1: How did you get interested in conducting this study?**

**A:** I first heard about the Integrated Palliative Care Outcomes Scale (IPOS) at the Asia Pacific Hospice Conference. It struck me as a tool that was really patient-centred and focused on the main concerns and problems that someone with advanced cancer might have. I contacted the developers of the tool to explore if we could use the tool in Singapore.

#### **Q2: Can you briefly introduce your study and what are the major research findings?**

**A:** The study seeks to translate the Integrated Palliative Care Outcomes Scale (IPOS) into Chinese, and then validate both the English and translated Chinese version in Singapore.

#### **Q3: What are the clinical and research implications of this study? Would it be possible to implement this measure into routine clinical practice?**

**A:** This study makes the IPOS tool available for use in Singapore. This can be used to screen for patient problems as well as track patient-centred outcomes in those referred to palliative care services.

**Q4: Do you have any future research plan based on this study?**

**A:** The IPOS tool is being used in a new model of care that seeks to proactively monitor for issues in advanced cancer patients, to facilitate the early identification and prompt addressing of any problems identified.

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**Researcher portfolio**

This study was completed by the team led by Dr Grace Yang, Consultant of Department of Palliative Medicine, National Cancer Centre Singapore. Her research interest includes health services research, quality of life and spirituality.

The team members included Prof Cheung Yin Bun from Duke NUS Medical School and Prof Richard Harding from Cicely Saunders Institute of Palliative Care, Policy & Rehabilitation, King's College London, UK.