

Results Analysis of archival and qualitative interview material has highlighted that patients and family appreciate a voice recording. Patients value having time to reflect and express identity in an oral history interview, and recording personal life stories can engender a sense of autonomy at a time when they wield little power in their lives. Bereaved relatives find the recording comforting: "It's a memory for me. I've got something that's a little bit of her." Both patients and family find oral history cathartic.

Conclusions We have established that oral history enhances patient experience of palliative care by providing them with opportunities to talk about their past and present in a non-medical context. Bereaved family highlight that a voice recording is extremely important to them. This research provides vital information to support the future shape and direction of oral history services.

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HOW DOES PROVIDING AN ORAL HISTORY AT THE END OF LIFE INFLUENCE WELL-BEING OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE BEREAVED?

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Background Oral history captures and preserves patients' voices and involves them in the process of producing their own life histories. A Macmillan pilot project has created five oral history services in the north of England and Northern Ireland, additional to a service in Sheffield established in 2007. To understand the role of oral history in palliative care and bereavement, a further project has explored its significance amongst patients and bereaved family.

Aim To assess the impact of recording an oral history with palliative care patients, and to understand how the recording is received in bereavement by family.

Method Literature review and survey of life story work in palliative care settings; analysis of an existing archive of oral histories; semi-structured interviews with patients, family, bereavement group members and health care professionals.