

P 089

**DEPRESSION AMONG PALLIATIVE CARE INPATIENTS
IN A SONGKHLA HOSPITAL, SOUTHERN THAILAND**

Teeraporn Vichurangri,¹ Kallaya Sae-Chit,¹ Kittikorn Nilmanat². ¹Department of nursing services, Songkhla hospital, Songkhla, Thailand; ²Department of medical nursing, Faculty of nursing, Prince of Songkla university, Songkhla, Thailand

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Introduction Depression is common in patients with advanced disease. However depression remains under detected.

Objective This retrospective study was aimed to describe depression among patients seen by an advanced practice nurse in Songkhla hospital.

Methods Subjects were hospitalized patients who were consulted to a palliative care service. In general, every patient consulted to a palliative care team received a routine first assessment by an advanced practice nurse. A routine assessment included demographic data, clinical data and health profiles. The nurse administered two questions screening tool (2Q) for depression screening. “Do you feel depressed?” and “have you lost interest or pleasure or felt boring?” If it was found ‘positive result’ for depression, further 9Q—nine questions for depression and suicidal minds assessment was applied. Patients’ palliative care nursing record were recruited into the study between January 2013 and June 2013. Descriptive statistics were used.

Results A total of 188 nursing records were reviewed to estimate the incidence of depression. At a screening section, using 2Q short form Depression Screening Questions, 35.1% of the subjects had negative result while 18.6% had positive result or were risky for depression. The rest (46.3%) were not able to assess, because patients were unconsciousness or on ET tube. Those being at risk for depression were further assessed by 9Q. According to the original cut-off point of 9Q, .5 % of those assessed classified as severe depression (9Q>19), and 2.1% were at moderate level of depression (9Q 13–18) and 6.4% were at mild level of depression (9Q 7–12). 9.6% were at the borderline level of depression.

Conclusion The findings suggest that health professionals should recognize psychological distress among this population by providing an initial screening assessment and preventive intervention.