

ON-LINE DATA SUPPLEMENT

Comparisons of Patients With or Without a Serious Desire for Death

Demographic, Social, and Clinical Characteristics

Participants with or without a serious desire for death were comparable with respect to gender, age, marital status, living arrangement (alone versus other), and education, $ps > .10$. The groups also had comparable median survival durations (68.5 days from the time of the interview for those with a serious desire for death vs. 61 days for those without, $p = .33$).

Structured Interview of Symptoms and Concerns

Supplementary Table 1 shows the prevalence of individual symptoms and concerns as rated on the SISC, as well as the total scores for each of the subscales. The total subscale scores were significantly higher among patients with a serious desire for death, indicating greater symptom distress, on each of the physical, $t(375) = 5.15, p < .001$, social-relational, $t(375) = 3.86, p < .001$, existential, $t(375) = 3.60, p < .001$, and psychological, $t(375) = 4.94, p < .001$, dimensions.

With respect to individual problems, patients with a serious desire for death were more likely to experience difficulties with the physical symptoms of general malaise, drowsiness, nausea, and weakness ($ps < .005$), although there was no significant difference between groups in the prevalence of moderate-to-severe pain ($p = .093$). The two groups also differed in the rates with which they reported social concerns around isolation, difficulties communicating with family, and the sense of having become a burden to others ($ps < .01$), as well as in existential issues regarding loss of resilience, loss of dignity, and loss of control ($ps < .03$).

There were significant differences between the groups on all of the psychological symptoms assessed by the SISC ($ps < .001$), with prevalence rates among those with a serious desire for

death that were 3-5 times higher than among those without. Overall, patients with a serious desire for death were more likely to acknowledge a general sense of suffering ($p < .001$).

Supplementary Table 1

Symptoms and Concerns Reported by Patients With or Without a Serious Desire for Death

Symptom or Concern	No Serious Desire for Death (n=331)	Serious Desire for Death (n=46)	P-value
Physical Symptoms			
General malaise	126 (38.1)	32 (69.6)	< .001
Drowsiness	95 (28.7)	26 (56.5)	< .001
Nausea	49 (14.8)	15 (32.6)	.004
Weakness	183 (55.3)	39 (84.8)	< .001
Breathlessness	82 (24.8)	16 (34.8)	.104
Pain	107 (32.3)	20 (43.5)	.093
Total (<i>M, SD</i>)	10.05 (6.0)	14.91 (5.8)	< .001
Social-relational concerns			
Social isolation	29 (8.8)	15 (32.6)	< .001
Communication problem	4 (1.2)	4 (8.7)	.009
Burden to others	77 (23.3)	21 (45.7)	.002
Financial problem†	32 (9.7)	2 (4.3)	.184
Total (<i>M, SD</i>)	2.6 (2.8)	4.9 (3.9)	< .001
Existential issues			
Loss of resilience‡	18 (5.5)	15 (32.6)	< .001
Loss of dignity	18 (5.4)	7 (15.2)	.022
Loss of control	14 (4.2)	11 (23.9)	< .001
Spiritual crisis‡	9 (2.7)	2 (4.4)	.388
Difficulty accepting	26 (7.9)	7 (15.2)	.09
Dissatisfaction with life	15 (4.5)	4 (2.3)	.190
Total (<i>M, SD</i>)	2.5 (3.0)	5.5 (5.5)	< .001
Psychological difficulties			
Anxiety	39 (11.8)	18 (39.1)	< .001
Depression	36 (10.9)	16 (34.8)	< .001
Loss of interest/pleasure†	37 (11.2)	16 (34.8)	< .001
Hopelessness‡	25 (7.6)	17 (37)	< .001
Total (<i>M, SD</i>)	3.1 (3.4)	7.4 (5.7)	< .001
Global considerations			
Suffering	66 (19.9)	29 (63.0)	< .001

Note: Table entries are n (%) of participants who endorsed specific symptoms or concerns at a moderate-to-extreme level; p values are based on Fisher's exact tests for individual symptoms

and concerns and *t*-tests for total scores. Total scores refer to the mean of the summed item ratings within each of the physical, social-relational, existential, and psychological dimensions; † one patient with missing data; ‡ two patients with missing data.

