

# A study of the experiences of loved ones involved in decision-making at the end of life

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## INTRODUCTION

In most cases, the condition of patients in intensive care units is critical when no improvement is expected and the prognosis is poor.

Relatives often experience waves of hope associated with improvement, but at the same time there is a constant risk of deterioration and

possible loss of the patient. In the end-of-life period, the decision-making process is critical from both a patient and loved one perspective. It is important to form a team based on mutual trust between doctors, nurses, the patient and / or the loved one, for the benefit of the patient.

## METHODS

Using a semi-structured interview, we enrolled 10 relatives who care about patients in terminal condition. A qualitative study was conducted in April – July, 2021. All interview data were recorded on audio tape (using a dictaphone) and, for accuracy, were recorded in the investigator's notes with the prior consent of the informants. The permission of the Lithuanian University of Health Science Bioethics Center to perform the study in the selected health care institution was obtained.

## CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the help of other people is important for the relatives in the care of the terminal patient, as well as the psychological factors that the relatives face.

## AIM

To evaluate the experience of patients' relatives involved in terminal patient care.

## RESULTS

It is extremely difficult for relatives to accept the relative existence of a relative due to certain psychological factors, and it is extremely difficult to come to terms with the fact of death.

In addition, there was a lack of cooperation between nurses providing end-of-life care and relatives - relatives reluctantly or not at all involved in the care process. Some feel fearful, others refuse and distance themselves from hospital care, and sometimes distrust of relatives in health care hinders the effective care of terminal patients.