

Docs, patients have different attitudes toward end-of-life care

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(HealthDay)—Attitudes toward end-of-life resource allocation differ for patients with cancer and their caregivers and for physicians, according to a study published online April 24 in *JAMA Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*.

Daniel J. Rocke, M.D., J.D., from the Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C., and colleagues examined data from 767 otolaryngology head and neck surgery (OHNS) [physicians](#) who used an online tool to create a Medicare health plan for patients with advanced [cancer](#). A limited pool of resources was allocated into 15 benefit categories. The data were compared with those obtained using the same tool by 146 patients with cancer and 114 [caregivers](#).

The researchers found that OHNS physician allocations differed significantly from those of patients and caregivers in all benefit

categories except home care. On stratification by baseline attitudes toward quantity versus quality of life, there were significant differences in the allocations of patients and caregivers from the group with the opposite attitude in three categories: other medical care, palliative care, and treatment for cancer. For each attitude question, physician preferences were significantly different in only one, nonmatching category: cash, drugs, and home care.

"Patients with cancer and their caregivers have different preferences from physicians," the authors write. "These preferences are, for these [patients](#) and their caregivers, affected by their baseline health attitudes, but physician preferences are not."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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