Timing of do-not-resuscitate order and aggressiveness of care near the end of life in cancer patients: a retrospective cohort study

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Introduction

Patients with advanced cancer are often cared for and die in hospitals in China. Do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order is crucial in end-of-life care for them. This study examined the association between the timing of DNR orders and the aggressiveness of end-of-life care.

Objectives

- The aims of this study were to:
- Describe the timing of signing DNR orders,
 - Explore the association between signing a DNR order and health care utilization during the last hospitalization among advanced cancer patients in mainland China.

Methods

A retrospective chart review was done in three tertiary hospitals in China. Data about cancer patients' characteristics, DNR order, aggressive and comfort measures were collected during the last hospitalization since January 2016 to December 2017.

Measurement. A data extraction form was developed by the research team according to the framework of the research (Figure 1). It was composed of:

- (1) Timing of DNR orders;
- (2) Health care utilization (comfort measures and life-sustaining treatments (LSTs)).

Figure 1 Framework of research