

# OPTion-study - design

## Treatment goals of elderly patients with cancer in a palliative setting

M.E. Stegmann MD; J. Schuling MD, PhD; T.J.N. Hiltermann MD, PhD; A.K.L. Reyners MD, PhD;  
H. Burger MD, PhD; M.Y. Berger MD, PhD; A.J. Berendsen MD, PhD  
University Medical Center Groningen

### Background

Elderly patients with cancer in a palliative setting

- Often multimorbidity
- Short life expectancy

Important to talk in a shared decision making setting explicitly about:

- Benefits and harms of cancer therapy
- Personal values concerning end of life

### Main research question

What is the effect of a structured conversation with the GP, just before a new treatment decision has to be made, about generic treatment goals on patient empowerment of elderly patients with cancer in a palliative setting?

### Design

Randomised controlled trial

- Intervention group (OPT-group)
- Control group (care as usual)

Embedded observational study

- Intervention group (OPT-group)

### Population

168 patients from different hospitals in the north of the Netherlands

Inclusion criteria

- Age 70 years or above
- New treatment decision in non-curable cancer

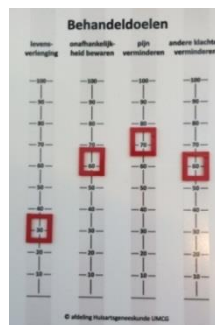
### Conclusion

This study analyzes the effects on patient empowerment of a conversation about generic treatment goals between patient and general practitioner before a decision about the treatment of non-curable cancer is made by the patient and oncologist. Furthermore the study aims to involve the general practitioner in the early palliative phase and to promote a more active patient role in treatment decisions.

### Highlights

- In the OPTion-study patients have a conversation with their general practitioner just after the diagnosis of non-curable cancer
- The general practitioner uses the OPT to discuss generic treatment goals
- Afterwards the patient will discuss the treatment options with the oncologist

### Intervention



Conversation about generic treatment goals by the general practitioner in which the Outcome Prioritization Tool (OPT) is used.

- Four scales each representing a goal
- The patient values and ranks these goals

Generic treatment goals:

- Extending life
- Maintaining independence
- Reducing pain
- Reducing other symptoms

More information/ video: [optool.nl](https://optool.nl)



### Outcomes

Primary

- Patient empowerment (Decision Self-Efficacy scale): belief in one's ability to make decisions, including participating in shared decision making

Secondary

- Anxiety, depression and fatigue

Embedded observational study

- OPT-scores during six months
- User satisfaction