

Core Functions of Regional Palliative Care Networks in the Netherlands: The State of the Art

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INTRODUCTION

- ▶ In the Netherlands, palliative care (PC) is approached as non-specialized care, providing equitable access for all
- ▶ Across the country, 66 Regional Palliative Care Networks (RPCNs) aim to improve the quality of PC in their region
- ▶ In June 2014, a set of Minimum Requirements was introduced in all RPCNs regarding the four core functions, i.e. FACILITATING, COORDINATING, INFORMING, and MONITORING PC in the region

Distribution of Regional Palliative Care Networks in the Netherlands



OBJECTIVE

To investigate the extent to which the RPCNs meet the minimum requirements and to determine future priorities.

RESEARCH METHODS

Design

- ▶ Cross-sectional study (June-September 2015)

Data collection

- ▶ Online questionnaire

Study population

- ▶ All RPCN coordinators and chairs, and one delegate per organization (n=931)

Analysis

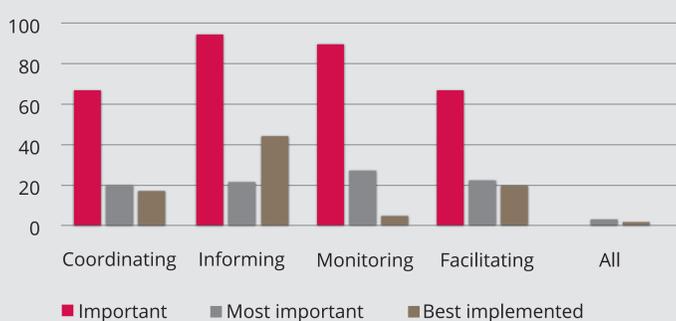
- ▶ Completed questionnaires only
- ▶ Descriptive statistics and non-parametric tests were used

RESULTS

- ▶ 263 (28%) participants, representing 55/66 RCPN, various settings and disciplines
- ▶ 78% were familiar with the set of Minimum Requirements
- ▶ A large majority considered MONITORING as the most important function, whereas only 5% considered this function as best implemented (fig. 1)
- ▶ Almost half of all respondents (45%) reported the function INFORMING being best implemented
- ▶ A large majority of the respondents reported positively on the RNPC tasks providing education and information, and facilitating quality of care (fig. 2). The participation of patients and family was considered the highest future priority

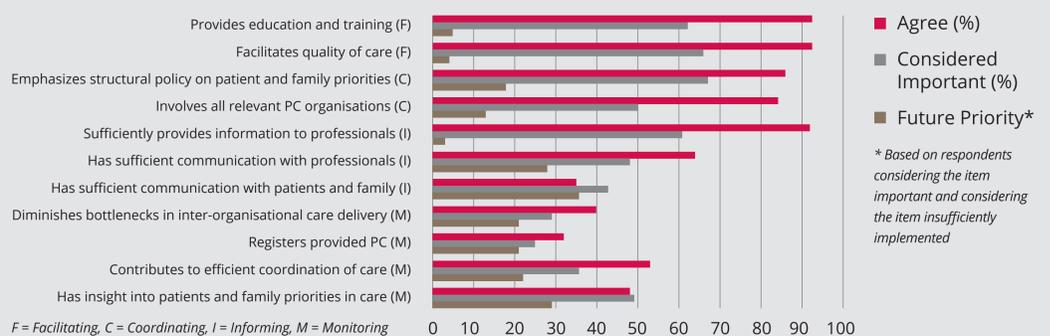
Core functions of RNPC (%)

Fig. 1 Opinions regarding core functions



Our RNPC

Fig. 2 Main activities of RNPC



F = Facilitating, C = Coordinating, I = Informing, M = Monitoring

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- ▶ In the Netherlands some 1.000 professionals participate in the 66 Regional Palliative Care Networks, as delegate of their organization or as coordinator
- ▶ The performance of the core functions FACILITATING, COORDINATING, INFORMING and MONITORING PC, as well as the impact of the RPCNs on the provision of PC varies
- ▶ The set of Minimal Requirements intend to advance the harmonization of PC throughout the country
- ▶ Most RPCN currently put emphasis on FACILITATING, e.g. dissemination of knowledge, and on COORDINATING, e.g. on networking between organizations
- ▶ The Fibula Foundation supports and coordinates improvement-projects, to support the RPCNs to fulfill the criteria

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