



ASSESSMENT OF UNMET NEEDS AND BARRIERS TO END-OF-LIFE CARE PROVISION IN KAZAKHSTAN

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INTRODUCTION

Palliative care, a holistic multidisciplinary approach for those persons with terminal diseases, providing relief for physical, emotional, psychosocial and spiritual suffering of both the patients and their families and to support the dignity of all involved in the process of dying¹.

Palliative care has developed recently, and an understanding of unmet needs and barriers, especially in Kazakhstan, can be addressed through innovative rigorous qualitative research methods covering all the stakeholders involved. Palliative care is an integral Nazarbayev University's commitment to improving health services in Kazakhstan. The published literature shows a lack of palliative care providers in Kazakhstan and the few existing services are underdeveloped^{2,3}.

Our current will substantially characterize more in-depth and more broadly on opportunities and barriers for national expansion of quality palliative care in Kazakhstan.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the barriers for end-of-life care provision in Kazakhstan
- To specify the evidence for interventions to address unmet needs in palliative care provision in Kazakhstan
- To develop an appropriate model for palliative care provisions in Kazakhstan, for integration into the healthcare system of Kazakhstan
- To develop recommendations for palliative care provisions for the Government and appropriate stakeholders.

METHODS

Our proposed research project employed qualitative research methods, including semi-structured in-depth interviews using grounded theory. We conducted purposive recruiting with content analysis and semi-structured interviews until saturation was achieved.

Data Collection and Analysis



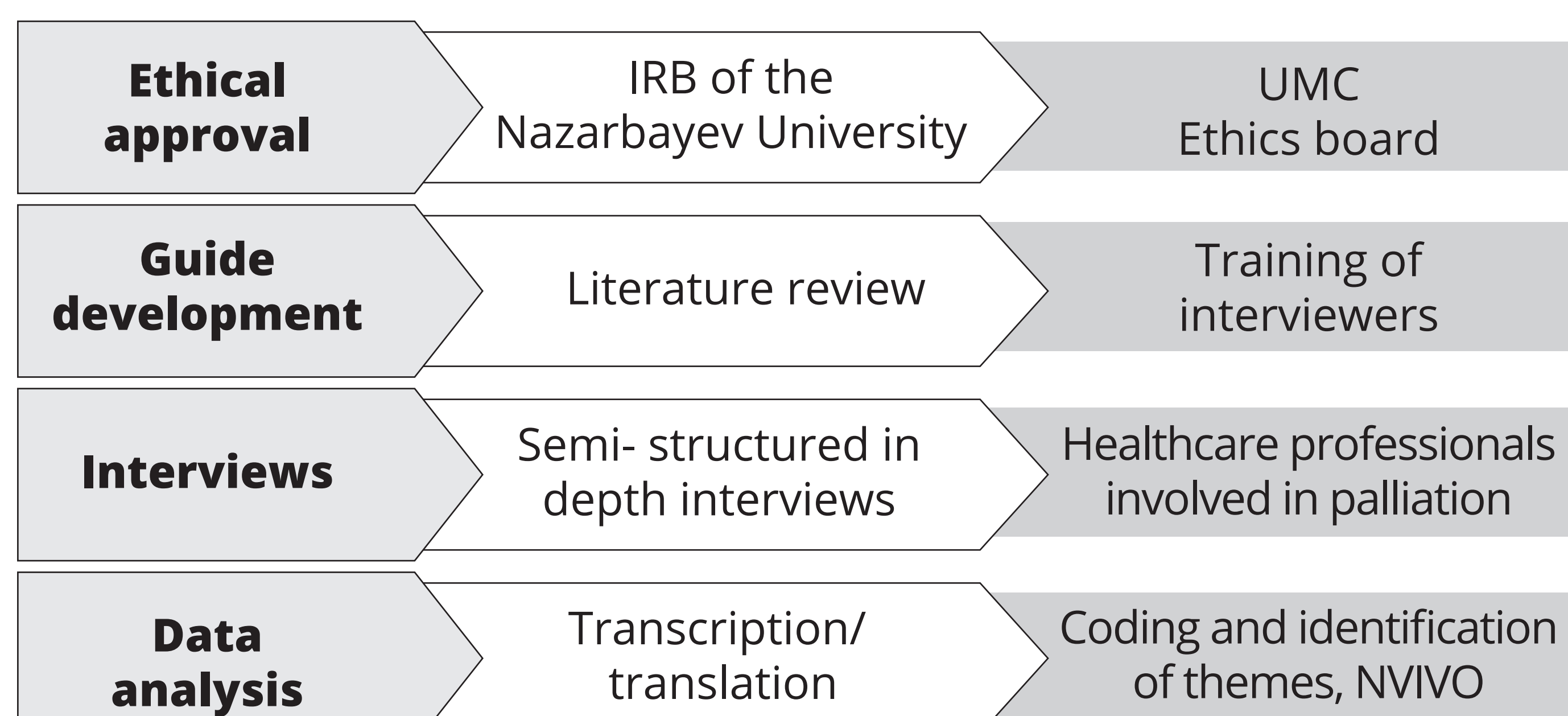
The interviews have been conducted at the University Medical Center (UMC) teaching hospitals, including National Research Center for Maternal and Child Health and the National Children's Rehabilitation Center.



The total number of participants were 65 individuals, of whom 26 were medical doctors, 20 nurses, 7 speech therapists, 6 psychologists, 4 educators and 2 social workers.



The data was then translated into English. Analysis of the interview data have been performed by using the computer assisted software analysis package - NVIVO.



THE EMERGENT THEMES AND CATEGORIES

Training and Recruitment of Specialists in Palliative Care Provision

"There is not enough specialists in this field, not everyone can work in palliative care. Maybe it is necessary to open places where specialists can be educated and trained".

Social Worker, In-depth interview

Pain relief for Palliative Care Patients

"Many children in our department have organ failure and in case of deterioration, these children either remain with us until the last moment involving transfer to the intensive care unit (until death), or transferred to regional children's hospitals in the regions. These children have a very pronounced manifestation of pain syndrome, and it is crucial to simplify the process of getting access to pain relief medications in the community at the outpatient level."

Physician, In-depth interview

Public Awareness about Palliative Care

"I think that in Kazakhstan public awareness regarding Palliative Care Services is very limited. Many people believe that palliative care is restricted to sending a patient home"

Physician, In-depth interview

RESULTS

The study findings indicate the evidence of growing demand in training of healthcare professionals, inadequate provision of pain relief and lack of public awareness about palliation as primary obstacles for palliative care development in Kazakhstan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend addressing the identified barriers through public health approach by developing educational and training opportunities for healthcare professionals and establishing the center of excellence in palliative care training and research at the Nazarbayev University School of Medicine to provide an opportunity for national expansion of quality palliative care in Kazakhstan.

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