

## Publication

### The conceptual understanding of pediatric palliative care: a Swiss health-care perspective

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Health care providers' perception of pediatric palliative care might negatively influence timely implementation. The aim of the study was to examine understanding of and attitudes towards pediatric palliative care from the perspective of health care providers working in pediatric oncology in Switzerland to promote the timely implementation of pediatric palliative care.; Five mixed focus groups were conducted with 29 health care providers (oncologists, nurses, psychologists, and social workers) at five Swiss pediatric oncology group centers. The focus group interviews were analyzed using thematic coding.; Most participants associated pediatric palliative care with non-curative treatment. They regularly reported difficulties in addressing palliative care services to families due to the strong stigma surrounding this term. They also thought that the notion of palliative care is very much linked to a policy context, and difficult to reconcile with children's everyday life. To overcome these obstacles many participants used synonyms such as comfort or supportive care. A few providers insisted on the need of using palliative care and reported the importance of positive "word of mouth".; The use of synonyms might be a pragmatic approach to overcome initial barriers to the implementation of palliative care in pediatrics. However, this tactic might ultimately prove to be ineffective as these terms might acquire the same negative connotations as palliative care. Positive word-of-mouth by satisfied families and healthcare providers might be a more sustainable way to advocate for pediatric palliative care than replacing it with a euphemistic term.

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