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**Introducing the Trajectory Touchpoint Technique: A Systematic Methodology for Capturing the Voices of Palliative Care Service Users**

Content:

Background

We present the trajectory touchpoint technique (TTT), a new methodology to appreciate all user experiences of palliative care. Better understanding of user needs means providers can become more patient-centered. However, no available tools capture experience of all aspects of palliative care. Consequently we developed the new methodology, allowing a deep dive into the palliative care journeys of patients and their families.

Methods

Using concepts from the social sciences, we blended service blueprinting, customer journeys, touchpoints, servicescapes, experienced based co-design, and rich pictures methodology; producing a technique that systematically captures palliative care user experiences from seven major dimensions. The technique incorporates all aspects of palliative care that are important to the user, integrating emotional, physical, sensorial, and social elements of their experience. We have tested and refined the TTT in a collaboration with hospices and palliative care providers (n=8), successfully capturing the voices (n= 223) of palliative care patients and their families.

Results

The TTT overcomes many data collection difficulties typical to palliative care. The TTT is easy to understand and use, yet costs a fraction of alternative techniques while allowing for a broader perspective into patient-centeredness, incorporating both the clinical encounter and macro-level organizational structures and processes. Importantly, results demonstrate the TTT’s ability to uncover areas for improvement that alternative methodologies have failed to identify, despite many of our collaborating organizations already being rated as ‘outstanding’.

Conclusions

Data collection methods that reveal actionable results which lead to meaningful changes are crucial to implementing improvements to palliative care. Our TTT responds to this need. Based on our results, our collaborating organizations have already begun to make improvements to the ways in which palliative care services are designed, delivered, communicated, co-created, and connected to the wider health care ecosystem.