

Nurse-Led Quality Improvement Presentation of Advance Directives in an Outpatient Oncology Setting

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“It always seems too soon, until it’s too late.” ---Ira Byock, MD

Purpose

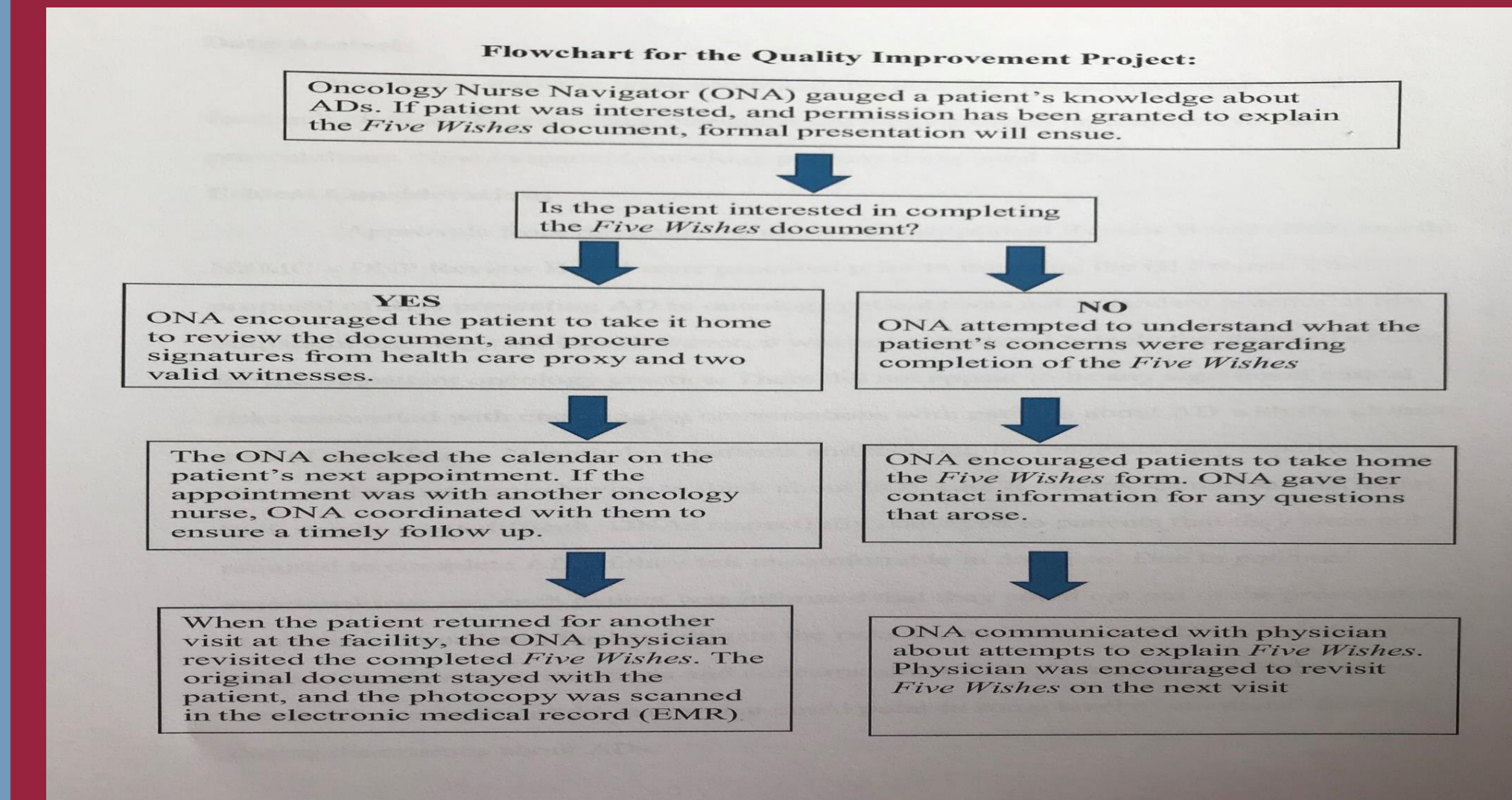
- There is an estimated 70% of Americans who have not explored advance care planning (ACP) and completed advance directives (ADs) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2017).
- ACP is intended to be an ongoing process of discussion among patients, families, and the health care team to elucidate goals when the patient is unable to communicate their preferences (Sinclair et al., 2017).
- Registered nurses (RNs) are in a prime position to deliver meaningful support for their patients by having conversations about ACP. (Kaplan, 2018).

Abstract

For patients with no ADs, vital conversations about ACP can occur late with respect to a patient’s well-being; they can experience a precipitous decline in health condition, rendering a patient unable to verbalize their end-of-life (EOL) wishes.

Problem

Presentation of ADs by RNs in the outpatient oncology setting has not been previously explored by this northeastern regional medical center (NRMC). However, RNs have the ability to form meaningful relationships with patients that can translate to initiating conversations about ADs. This QI project assessed the feasibility of a nurse-led AD presentation.



The Five Wishes

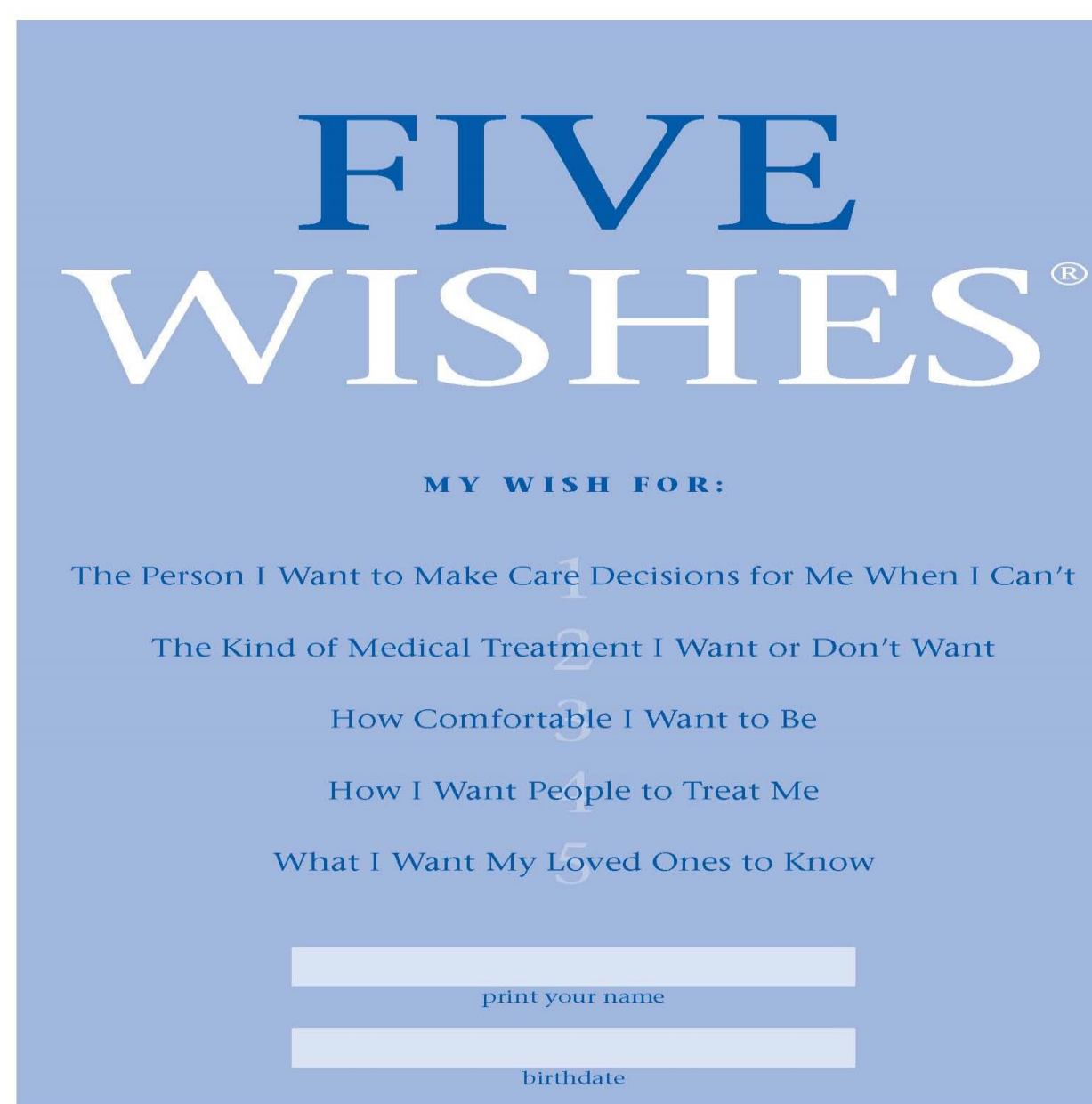
Advance directive document that was selected for use in this QI project. It provides simplicity and clarity in completing ADs. The *Five Wishes* program is legal in 42 states, and available in 29 different languages. It does not need to be notarized in order to be legal (Aging with Dignity, 2018).

Conclusion

The purpose of this QI project was to provide an opportunity to explore an innovative way to elevate patient care delivery by utilizing nurse-led interventions in improving oncology patient conversations about ACP. As the knowledge about ACP continued to strengthen through the months, it was inspiring to realize that there is strong evidence that clinical nurses have the unique ability to reach out to patients and encourage them to think about their ADs.

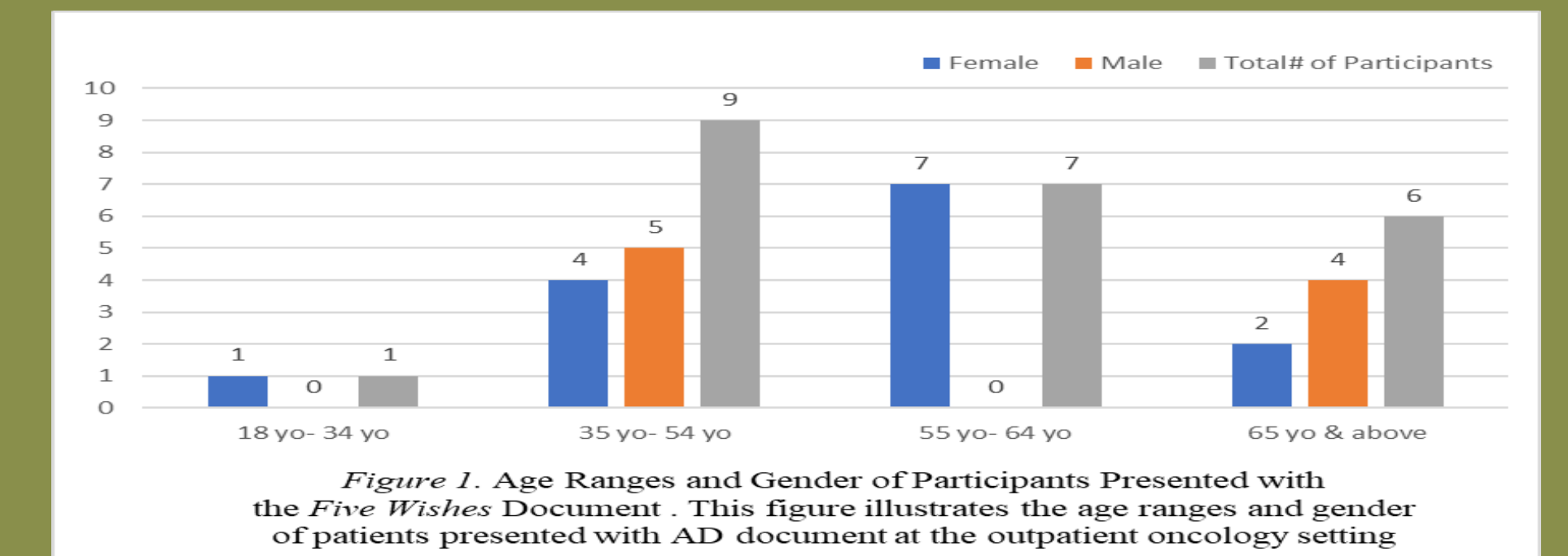
Method

- Oncology Nurse Ambassador (ONA) Education
Two ONAs at the outpatient oncology setting were educated to present *Five Wishes* to patients. ONAs were given one-to-one coaching sessions on how to present Five Wishes as part of a conversational flow during appointment meetings.
- ONAs determined which patients met inclusion criteria by reviewing patient information on the EMR. The patients who were approached were English-speaking and non-English speaking adult oncology patients, aged 18-years-old and older. Non-English-speaking patients were offered the use of interpreters and language line for AD presentations.

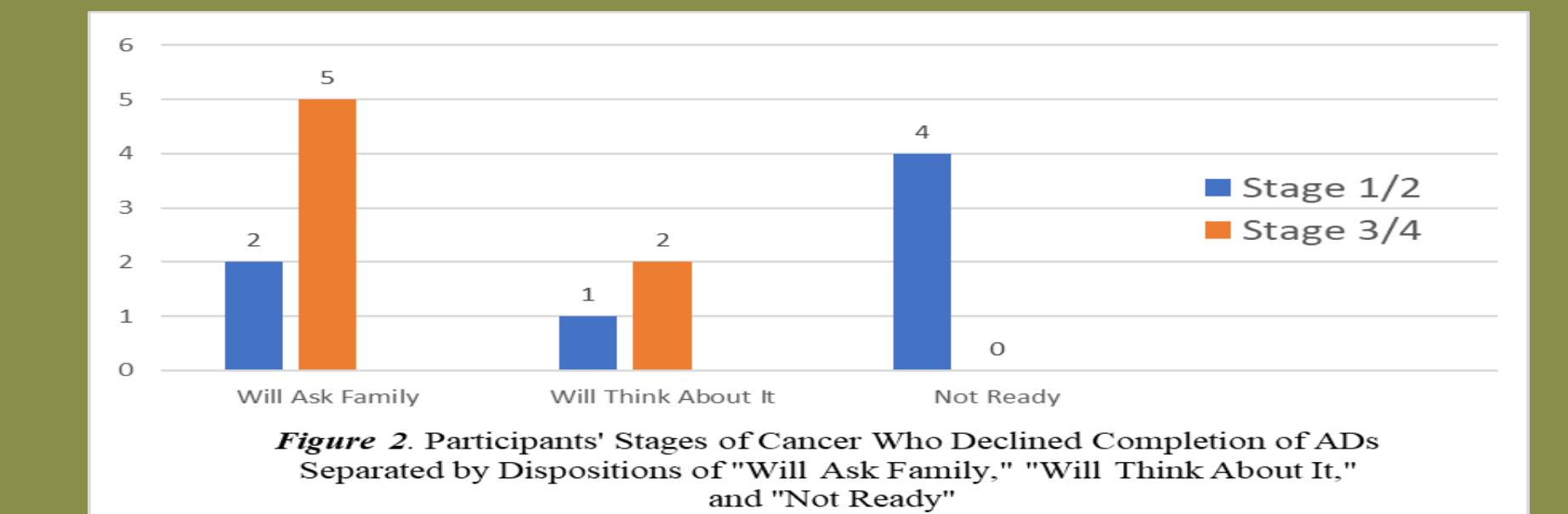


Results

During the 12-week duration of the QI project, a total of 23 presentations of the *Five Wishes* took place at the outpatient oncology setting. Of the 23 presentations, nine participants completed ADs, with a 39.13% completion rate. Results exceeded the initial goal of 5% completion rate for the QI project.



Of the 23 oncology patients who agreed to participate in AD presentations, the age range was between 28 years-old to 75 years-old, and the average was 56.3 years-old (SD = 13.10). Of the nine oncology patients who completed ADs, the age range was 52 - 73 years-old, and average age was 59.78 years-old (SD = 7.26).



Will ask family," patients may need the involvement of family members to discuss Five Wishes. "Will think about it," patients do not need the involvement of family members, but wanted more time to contemplate on the components of the Five Wishes. "Not ready," patients were unable to consider completing Five Wishes at this time.

References

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