

New Zealand Report

18 Physician responses from New Zealand.

94% of respondents practice in hospital settings.

621 Physician responses from 18 countries.



Among the 20 million children globally in need of palliative care, 27% live in Asia-Pacific.

In New Zealand, there are 152 new childhood cancer cases each year.

The ADAPT study aims to assess physician perceptions towards palliative care integration for children and adolescents diagnosed with cancer.

Palliative Care

Defined by the WHO as the prevention and relief of patient suffering and the ethical responsibility of health systems that should be integrated with and complement prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment.



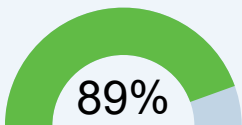
Palliative Care integrated into health care systems at all levels:

- Is cost-effective
- Improves resource utilization
- Decreases patient suffering, parental psychological distress

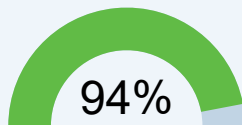
Additional Information: Integrating Palliative Care and Symptom Relief Into Pediatrics: A WHO Guide for Health Care Planners, Implementers and Managers. WHO; 2018.

Access to Pediatric Palliative Care

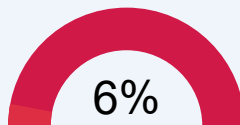
Reported access to palliative care in their clinic or hospital.



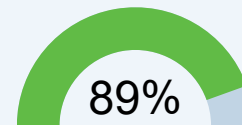
Indicated that palliative care consultation is available when they felt it was needed.



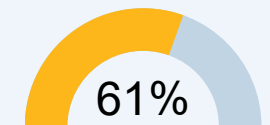
Felt that palliative care was involved too late.



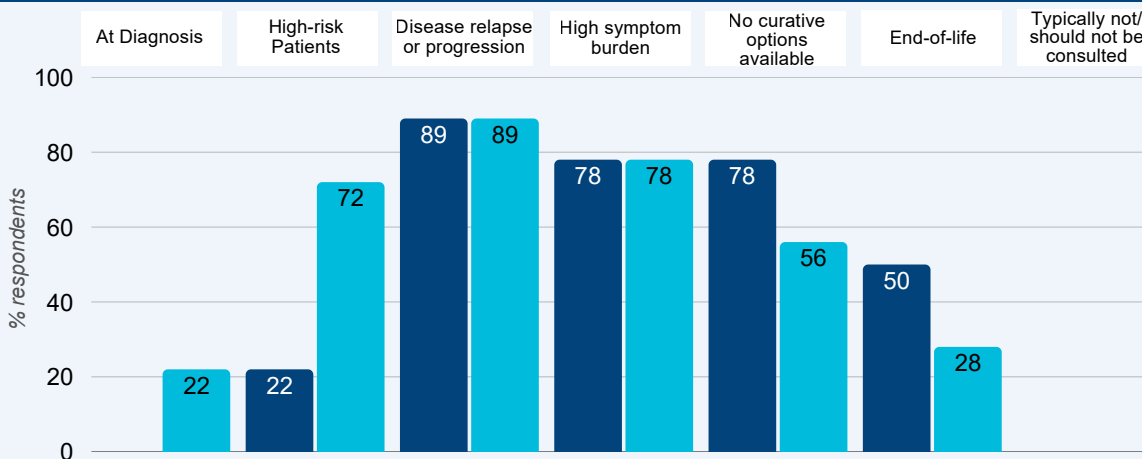
Believe palliative care is appropriate at any stage of treatment in a child with high-risk cancer.



Believe palliative care integration reduces suffering.



Ideal Timing of Initial Palliative Care Consultation

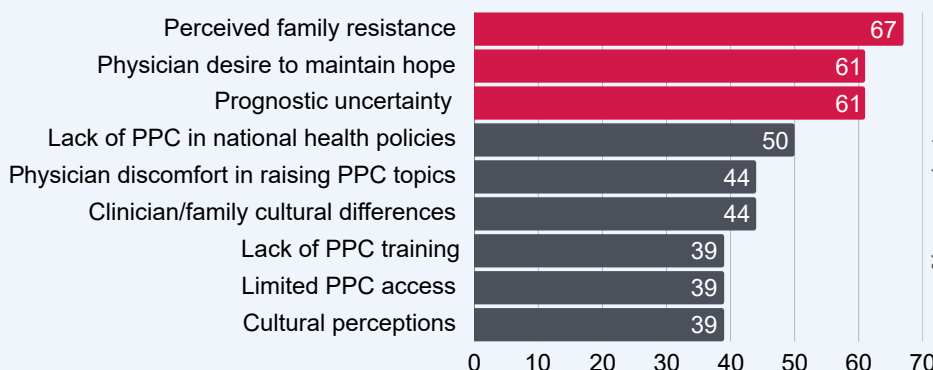


Actual timing of Palliative Care Consultation  
Ideal timing of Palliative Care Consultation

According to the WHO, early integration of palliative care is critical to improve the quality of life of children with cancer.

Physicians in New Zealand report that palliative care is often introduced late in the treatment of children with cancer, even though earlier integration would be beneficial.

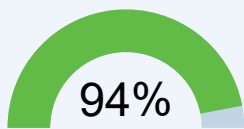
Barriers to Early Palliative Care Integration



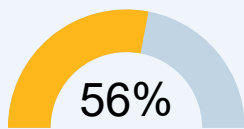
Physicians in New Zealand were asked to indicate which barriers impacted pediatric palliative care (PPC) provision in childhood cancer care delivery.

The most significant barriers reported were:  
#1 Barrier: Perceived family resistance to PPC involvement.  
#2-3 Barriers: Physician desire to maintain hope and prognostic uncertainty.

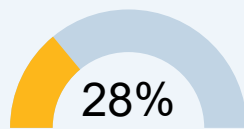
## Physician Confidence in Delivering Palliative Care



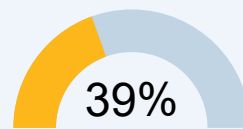
Feel confident addressing **physical needs** of children.



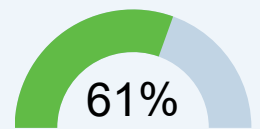
Feel confident addressing **emotional needs** of children.



Feel confident **addressing spiritual care needs** of children.

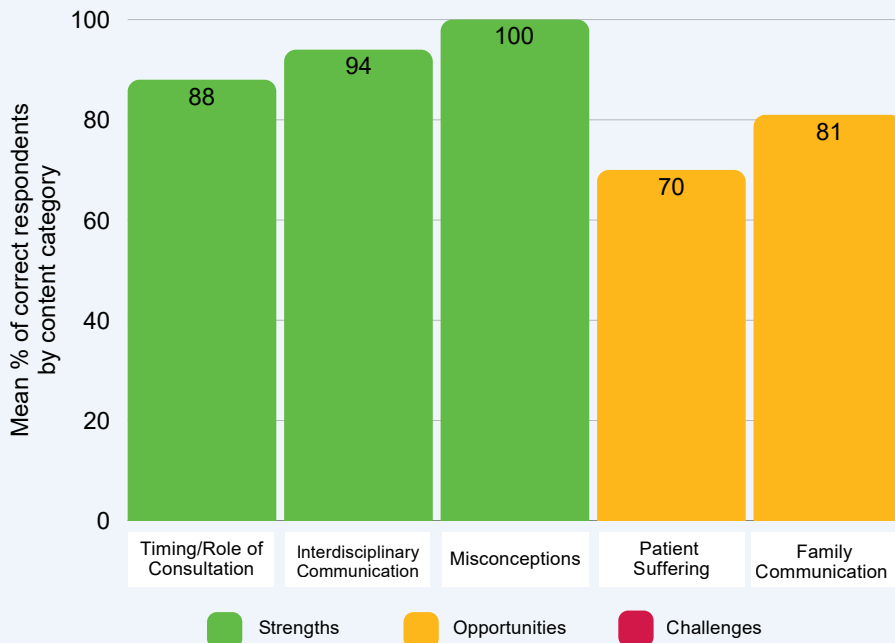


Feel confident providing **grief and bereavement** support.



**Feel burdened** by their inability to control the suffering of children at end-of-life.

## Physician Understanding of Pediatric Palliative Care



Opportunities to strengthen palliative care (PC) knowledge include clarifying its role in facilitating communication and alleviating suffering.

**86%** median score for palliative care knowledge in accordance with WHO guidance.

**50%** reported no previous palliative care education.

**94%** desired more education on how to provide palliative care to their patients.

### Strengths



High alignment with WHO guidance (86%).



High levels of access to pediatric palliative care consultation (89%).



Recognized need for palliative care training of clinicians to improve access (100%).

### Recommended Next Steps for New Zealand



Foster and support national research collaboration to allow identification of areas requiring improvement in pediatric palliative care provision.



Embed existing, high-quality pediatric palliative care education as a national program which integrates core principles into interdisciplinary clinical training.



Strengthen services into sustainable and integrated programs capable of delivering comprehensive interdisciplinary pediatric palliative care.



Engage policymakers to establish durable funding streams that meet actual need and fully integrate palliative care into national policy frameworks.



### Regional Implementation of ADAPT in New Zealand

Country-adapted pediatric palliative care curriculum based on identified knowledge gaps.

Collaborate with the WHO Regional Office and partner organizations on initiatives aimed at strengthening access to palliative care services for children across the region.

## References and Additional Information

Cuviello A\*, Salek M\*, Handayani SA, Blair S, Lam CG, on behalf of the ADAPT-AP Study Group. Survey Adaptation and Distribution for Physicians Caring for Children Diagnosed with Cancer in Asia Pacific: Unique Study Challenges and Lessons Learned. JCO Global Oncology. 2024.

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