Tackling the rhetoric: an evidence-based support needs tool to enable supportive care in advanced non-malignant disease

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**Methods**

Two stage qualitative study:

Stage 1: Identification of domains of support need in advanced COPD via:
- rapid review of literature
- analysis of qualitative data from the Living with Breathlessness Study (n=20 purposively sampled patients with advanced COPD)
- focus groups (n=3) with patients with advanced COPD

Stage 2: Development of the Support Needs Approach for Patients (SNAP) tool
- formulation of identified domains of need into questions (tool items)
- review and refinement of draft tool in stakeholder workshops (n=5; with patients, community respiratory team, and primary care practices) to establish acceptability and suitability for clinical practice

**Background**

Problem:
- Delivery of supportive and palliative care to patients with advanced non-malignant diseases such as COPD is hampered by the challenge of prognostication and unpredictability of disease trajectories

Possible solution:
- An alternative approach is delivery of care and support in response to patient-identified need

Aim
- This study aimed to develop a support needs tool for patients with advanced COPD, to enable patients to identify and express their support needs

**Results**

The developed SNAP tool is:
- provided by the clinician but completed by the patient
- asks patients to consider whether they need more support in relation to 16 broad areas (domains) of support need

Stakeholders:
- described the range of evidence-based domains of support need as comprehensive, and the layout as patient-friendly
- broadly endorsed SNAP tool and approach, but concerned about number of domains, time required within the consultation, and meeting patient expectations. (These issues will be tested in a future study)

**Conclusions**

- The SNAP tool has potential to help patients with advanced COPD, and other non-malignant diseases, identify and express their support needs to enable delivery of supportive care.
- Follow-on work is testing tool validity and feasibility of the approach.

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This paper presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research School for Primary Care Research (NIHR SPARC). The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR, the NHS or the Department of Health