

# Factors influencing resilience in patients with terminal illnesses

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** A holistic approach is crucial in the care of patients with terminal illnesses. However, assessment of psychospiritual coping in these patients is often subjective and variable across institutions. This study aimed to explore the psychospiritual coping of patients under palliative care using validated tools. **Methods:** This was an observational study on patients admitted to the palliative care unit of Queen Elizabeth Hospital from May to July 2023. Factors influencing resilience and psychological well-being of patients analyzed using SPSS. **Results:** A total of 41 patients were included in this study. The majority of them had advanced cancer (87.8%) while 12.2% had chronic organ failures. Functionally 82.9% of patients had an ECOG Performance Status of 3/4. About half had an estimated prognosis of weeks to short months. The three most commonest reported distressing symptoms were poor mobility (53.6%), weakness (43.9%) and pain (12.2%). Only 61% of patients were able to complete psychospiritual assessment. The median Brief Resilience Scale was 15 (IQR 2.75), with a quarter reporting low resilience (score<14). The commonest coping strategies included emotional coping, acceptance, religion and instrumental support. Conscientiousness (65.2%) and agreeableness (60.9%) were the most prevalent personalities reported using the Big Five Personality Inventory. Instrumental coping, agreeable personality, and greater spiritual well-being were significantly associated with higher resilience among patients ( $p<0.05$ ). Resilience was significantly lower in those who were anxious or depressed using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale ( $p<0.05$ ). **Conclusion:** Brief validated tools were useful in identifying care gaps in improving coping among patients with terminal illnesses.