Supplemental material

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Appendix §1. Wording of Different Survey Versions

Rich Version

END OF LIFE SUFFERING

Mr. FR is a 75-year-old man. He is rich, has led a life of comfort, and knows real luxury. He is admitted for a hip fracture that is newly-diagnosed as metastatic pancreatic cancer. He declines surgery and, instead, is thinking of Medical Assistance in Dying. He believes this is a grievous situation where suffering and death are foreseeable. Rate the following 4 events for their potential impact on his symptoms. (Circle one for each)

#1: FR notices the nurses never remember his name even though he has been in hospital for days. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

#2: FR has a bathroom sink in his room, but the faucet is leaky and constantly making a dripping noise. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

#3: FR has a large surgery team and often sees them fail to wash their hands when entering his room. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

#4: FR has worsening dyspnea and can no longer enjoy talking by phone with his granddaughter. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

Poor Version

END OF LIFE SUFFERING

Mr. FR is a 75-year-old man. He is poor, has led a life of troubles, and knows real hardship. He is admitted for a hip fracture that is newly-diagnosed as metastatic pancreatic cancer. He declines surgery and, instead, is thinking of Medical Assistance in Dying. He believes this is a grievous situation where suffering and death are foreseeable. Rate the following 4 events for their potential impact on his symptoms. (Circle one for each)

#1: FR notices the nurses never remember his name even though he has been in hospital for days. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

#2: FR has a bathroom sink in his room, but the faucet is leaky and constantly making a dripping noise. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

#3: FR has a large surgery team and often sees them fail to wash their hands when entering his room. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

#4: FR has worsening dyspnea and can no longer enjoy talking by phone with his granddaughter. How much worse do you think this makes him feel?

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10
No Suffering   Extreme Suffering

Footnotes

Textbox showing exact wording of survey with rich version on left and poor version on right. Each respondent saw a single version. Sole difference between the two versions appears in the second sentence describing the patient as either rich or poor.

The design was specified in advanced based on earlier surveys conducted on lay people and professionals in non-healthcare settings (Cheek & Shafir, 2020). The survey offered limited clinical information and emphasized the primary distinction under investigation; namely, the patient's socioeconomic status.

A total of 500 surveys were originally printed (250 each with the poor and rich versions), 6 reserved for pilot testing, and the remaining 494 distributed to participants. The consent rate approached 70% (refusals not tracked) and the completion rate was 100% (no faulty or incomplete responses).

Appendix §2. Prior Diagnoses

	Medical Assistance in Dying (n = 920)	Palliative Care Patients (n = 49,176)
Malignancy Diagnosis		
Mouth, ear, nose, throat	24 (3)	1,699 (3)
Digestive tract	239 (26)	12,327 (25)
Repiratory tract	205 (22)	11,317 (23)
Muskuloskeletal, skin, breast	151 (16)	8,387 (17)
Genitourinary tract	174 (19)	9,065 (18)
Neurologic tract	62 (7)	3,177 (6)
Miscellaneous	360 (39)	21,058 (43)
Hematologic	58 (6)	4,498 (9)
Non-Malignancy Diagnosis		
Parkinson's disease or other CNS illness	158 (17)	6,388 (13)
Stroke or other CNS vascular event	76 (8)	7,243 (15)
Concussion or other CNS trauma	64 (7)	1,327 (3)
Myasthenia gravis or other myo-neuropathy	189 (21)	15,332 (31)
Congestive heart failure or other cardiac illness	332 (36)	22,836 (46)
Pulmonary fibrosis or other lung illness	351 (38)	22,684 (46)
Cirrhosis or other liver failure	50 (5)	3,533 (7)
Uremia or other kidney failure	77 (8)	9,214 (19)
Active Comorbidity		
Hypertension	169 (18)	12,050 (25)
Acid reflux	101 (11)	6,333 (13)
Diabetes	99 (11)	10,994 (22)
Anemia	86 (9)	8,083 (16)
Glaucoma	112 (12)	4,381 (9)
Anxiety	209 (23)	10,083 (21)
Depression	50 (5)	2,075 (4)

Footnotes
data are count (percentage) of each column
data sum to above 100% due to patients having more than 1 diagnosis
diagnoses based on ICD9 codes extracted from outpatient records in year before death
CNS denotes Central Nervous System

Appendix §3. Prior Medications

	Medical Assistance in Dying (n = 920)	Palliative Care Patients (n = 49,176)
Specific Medication in Last Month of Life		
Opioid	587 (64)	24,455 (50)
Beta blocker	119 (13)	8,247 (17)
Calcium blocker	71 (8)	5,222 (11)
Acid suppressor	284 (31)	14,679 (30)
Diabetes medication	30 (3)	3,866 (8)
Statin	75 (8)	6,570 (13)
Inhaled bronchodilator	51 (6)	2,709 (6)
Glaucoma medication	34 (4)	1,472 (3)
Benzodiazepine	405 (44)	16,311 (33)
Antidepressant	225 (24)	10,841 (22)

Footnotes
data are count (percentage) of each column
data sum to above 100% due to patients having more than 1 medication
medications based on DIN codes extracted from outpatient records in month before death