CareSearch Project Research Studies Register: Registration Proforma	0133

Study Title: Futile treatment at the end of life: legal, policy, sociological and economic perspectives

Brief description of the study:

The provision of futile treatment (which is treatment that cannot work or cannot achieve an acceptable quality of life) can harm patients and cause distress to their families and treating health professionals. Futile treatment also wastes scarce health resources.

This project explores how doctors understand futile treatment, why and how often they provide it (including the impact of the legal and policy environment), and the economic implications of doing so.

Through a law and policy review, qualitative interviews, a chart audit and economic modelling, this research will provide a rich understanding of why and how often doctors give treatment they believe to be futile and establish a new foundation for addressing its causes.

Study Methodology: (Please mark with an x which type of study methodology)

	Epidemiology
	Health Services / Health Economics / Quality Improvement
	Qualitative, Observational or Descriptive
X	Mixed Method
	Systematic Review
	Intervention: RCT
	Intervention: Comparative or cohort study
	Intervention: Case series

Project details:

Funding source (Optional): ARC Linkage Project						
Has the study received ethics approval?	**X**	Yes		No		Not applicable
Project starting date: 2012						
Project completion date: 2014						
Multi site:	**X**	Yes		No		Not applicable

RESEARCHERS

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Investigator F (Name) Sarah Winch
Associated publications / reports: L Willmott, B White, J Downie (2012) Withholding and Withdrawal of 'Futile' Life-Sustaining Treatment: Unilateral Medical Decision-Making in Australia and New Zealand. Journal of Law and Medicine, 20(4), pp. 907-924 S Lawrence, L Willmott, E Miligan, S Winch, B White and M Parker (2012) Autonomy versus futility? Barriers to good clinical practice in end-of-life care: a Queensland case. Medical Journal of Australia, 196(6), pp. 404-405
Topics (Admin only) Legal, Futile treatment, Prognosis