

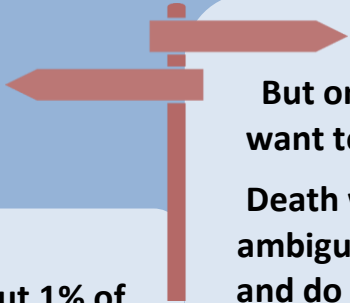
Evidence on the wish to die

v5



I want to die

A persistent wish to die can occur about 1% of older people without severe illness.¹



But only one seventh want to end their lives.

Death wishes are often ambiguous,^{1,2} transient³ and do not always imply a genuine wish for death⁴

- Depression is common in severe illness, especially in the first year after diagnosis⁵
- Depression is commonly missed by doctors.^{6,7}

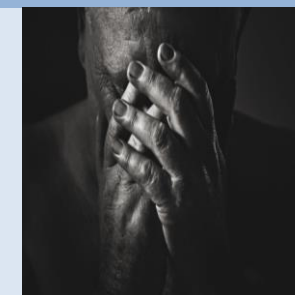


MISSED OPPORTUNITY



- Three quarters of those with a wish to die report being lonely and 60% have a clinical depression.¹
- In patients with progressive neurological disease, a wish to die is not related to cognitive or behavioural impairment but is strongly related to depression.⁸
- In the UK, loneliness is associated with long-lasting depressive symptoms.¹⁴

- A wish to die is strongly influenced by the perception of being a burden,⁹ or the fear of pain.¹⁰
- Of assisted deaths in Oregon in 2021, 53% felt a burden.¹¹
- Half of 'unbearable suffering' is psychological and social and does not predict a wish to die.^{12,13}



References

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