Title: The Klimop-study: Older cancer patients in Limburg. Baseline results of a cohort study.

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Introduction: Cancer is largely a disease of older patients. Previous studies on older cancer patients have focussed on the characteristics of this patient group, their ability to tolerate treatment and the use of geriatric assessment tools. However, the long term consequences of cancer (diagnosis and treatment) and ageing on the wellbeing of older cancer patients have been understudied.

Aim: We aim to determine the impact of cancer, ageing and their interaction on the wellbeing of older cancer patients.

Methods: The KLIMOP-study is a Belgian and Dutch cohort study. In each country we aim to recruit 500 older cancer patients (≥ 70 years) with a primary diagnosis of breast, prostate, lung or colorectal cancer and two control groups. A control group of 300 older patients (≥ 70 years) without a previous diagnosis of cancer (except non-melanoma of the skin) and a control group of 300 younger cancer patients (50 – 69 years) with a primary diagnosis of breast, prostate, lung or colorectal cancer. Data collection will take place at inclusion, after six months, after one year and every subsequent year until death or end of the study. Data will be collected through personal interviews (consisting of socio-demographic information, general health information, a comprehensive geriatric assessment, quality of life, health locus of control and a loneliness scale), a hand-grip test, information from the medical records, two buccal swabs (at baseline) and a blood sample from cancer patients.

Results: By the time of the Ca-PRI meeting, we will present preliminary results of Belgian and Dutch patients (± 300). Cross-sectional results will be presented, focusing on the association between ageing (assessed by geriatric assessment) and baseline wellbeing of older cancer patients.

Discussion: Within the context of the ageing population, an increasing number of older cancer patients and their need to maintain quality of life/wellbeing, this study will aid to provide insight on how wellbeing of older cancer patients is affected by cancer diagnosis and treatment, ageing and their interaction. Results might contribute to the improvement of knowledge and care for older cancer patients.