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**REVIEWS:****Blumenthal-Barby et al. Assessment of Patients' and Caregivers' Informational and Decisional Needs for Left Ventricular Assist Device Placement: Implications for Informed Consent and Shared Decision Making. J Heart Lung Transplant 2105; 34:1182-9.**

This study examined the decision making process of LVAD recipients and their caregivers, while also attempting to define their informational and decisional needs. Data was collected via structured interviews and surveys of patients and caregivers, including those individuals with LVADs as well as candidates who were in the process of making a decision. Additionally, all participants were determined to have acceptable medical and surgical risk/benefit ratios with LVAD implantation as determined by a multi-disciplinary medical review board, and good psychosocial support, coping mechanisms and financial resources as determined by a transplant social worker and administration of the Stanford Integrated Psychosocial Assessment for Transplantation tool. 45 participants, equally distributed amongst LVAD candidates, LVAD patients, and LVAD caregivers, were included in the final analysis. Of the LVAD patients and caregivers, the majority represented a destination therapy implant strategy.

The main themes which emerged from interviews included: the perception that there was no actual choice to be made; decisions were made without deliberation or discussion; decisions were made largely based on trust in their physician; and a need to connect with and hear from other patients and caregivers. Participants also identified "knowledge needs", specifically outlining educational and informational domains for both patients and caregivers. When rating regret on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 indicated no decisional regret, the average score was 1.307 for patients, and 1.477 for caregivers, suggesting participants made decisions consistent with their values.

This study provides insights into the thought processes of advanced heart failure patients and their support team. Importantly, the authors of this study suggest that patients and caregivers conceptualize the decision making process regarding implantation differently than clinicians, preferring shared information exchanges to help prepare rather than make a decision, as most feel that the decision has already been made. Additionally, while clinicians focus on adverse events and complications of implantation, patient reported knowledge needs centered more on lifestyle issues. Caregivers identified definitions of their responsibilities, in addition to recovery and transition periods, as their main needs.

Although this study is limited by its qualitative methods and varied interview environments, it does highlight the complexity of LVAD implantation evaluation and the need to provide decision support tools to obtain a true informed consent.

## ADDITIONAL ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

European Journal of Heart Failure:

Herscovici et al. Early Intervention and Long-Term Outcome with Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy in Patients Without a History of Advanced Heart Failure Symptoms. *Eur Heart J* 2015, 36:964-970

JACC-Heart Failure:

Witman et al. Further Peripheral Vascular Dysfunction in Heart Failure Patients With a Continuous-Flow Left Ventricular Assist Device. *JCHF* 2015;3:703-711.

Circulation Heart Failure:

Alehagen et al. Association Between Use of Statins and Mortality in Patients With Heart Failure and Ejection Fraction of  $\geq 50\%$ . *Circ Heart Fail.* 2015;8:862-870

Hashim et al. Clinical Characteristics and Outcomes of Intravenous Inotropic Therapy in Advanced Heart Failure. *Circ Heart Fail.* 2015;8:880-886.

Journal of Heart & Lung Transplantation:

Lampert and Teuteberg. Right Ventricular Failure After Left Ventricular Assist Devices. *J Heart Lung Transplant* 2015;34:1123-1130.

Jeewa et al. Outcomes After Percutaneous Coronary Artery Revascularization Procedures for Cardiac Allograft Vasculopathy in Pediatric Heart Transplant recipients: A Multi-Institutional Study. *J Heart Lung Transplant* 2015; 34:1163-1168

Potena et al. Interplay of Coronary Angiography and Intravascular Ultrasound in Predicting Long-Term Outcomes After Heart Transplantation. *J Heart Lung Transplant* 2015; 34:1146-1153

Journal of Cardiac Failure:

Dunbar et al. Randomized Clinical Trial of an Integrated Self-Care Intervention for Persons with Heart Failure and Diabetes: Quality of Life and Physical Functioning Outcomes. *J Card Fail.* 2015;21:719-729

New England Journal of Medicine:

Cowie et al. Adaptive Servo-Ventilation for Central Sleep Apnea in Systolic Heart Failure. *N Engl J Med* 2015; 373:1095-1105

Templin et al. Clinical Features and Outcomes of Takotsubo (Stress) Cardiomyopathy. *N Engl J Med* 2015; 373:929-938