Quality of life of patients with metastatic breast or intestinal cancer, treated with anthroposophic medicine or with mainstream medicine, the latter with or without psycho-oncologic or supplementary anthroposophic therapy

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This project dealt with two subjects. On the one hand, the measurement of the quality of life of cancer patients which needed to be further refined in order to assess the usefulness and efficacy of a treatment by complementary medicine. On the other hand, it was important to know whether severely ill cancer patients treated in an anthroposophical clinic would differ from equally ill patients in a university hospital in terms of attitude towards their illness and in terms of clinical diagnosis. Finally, an attempt was made to demonstrate an improvement of quality of life in conventionally treated patients of the university hospital, who were offered an additional treatment either with a supportive-expressive group therapy or with an anthroposophical therapy. More than 500 patients participated in the study. There were marked sociodemographic and medical differences between the patients of the anthroposophical clinic and those of the university hospital. In addition, it seems that spiritually oriented and active, problem-oriented coping contribute a lot to the quality of life. It was not possible to truly compare the value of the two additional therapies offered to the patients at the university hospital because patient accrual was much slower than anticipated and many patients left the study too early for health reasons or death.

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