



Orthothanasia: Medical practice in the face of natural death

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ABSTRACT

Orthothanasia is the non-investment in invasive and even futile actions and procedures that aim to prolong the suffering and death of an individual with an incurable disease at the end of life. In other words, orthothanasia provides a dignified death without suffering through palliative care, which consists of care provided to a person with an incurable disease.

Keywords: Orthothanasia, Palliative care, Solidarity.

1 INTRODUCTION

Orthothanasia is the non-investment in invasive and even futile actions and procedures that aim to prolong the suffering and death of an individual with an incurable disease at the end of life. In other words, orthothanasia provides a dignified death without suffering through palliative care, which consists of care provided to a person with an incurable disease.

The goal of orthothanasia is not to hasten death but to humanize it as a more humane act of care. It involves placing the person at the center of the process and promoting their autonomy in making choices, which includes solidarity, compassion, closeness, and respect.

After numerous discussions about the legitimacy of orthothanasia practice in Brazil in 2010, the plenary of the Federal Council of Medicine (CFM) held a meeting, and the New Code of Medical Ethics (CEM) was approved and consolidated. It came into effect on April 13 of the same year, adding provisions that directly guide professional conduct to regulate the practice of orthothanasia.

This study aims to discuss orthothanasia in the practical context of medical practice, as well as its distinction from other ways of treating or conducting palliative care in healthcare services based on available literature. It also considers the practical difficulty faced by medical professionals in safely implementing orthothanasia.



As an initial hypothesis, this study intends to investigate, through the analysis of published materials, how orthothanasia is practiced by medical teams, the level of knowledge about the topic, the choice of approach to patients in palliative care, and the obstacles encountered in implementing this care.

Therefore, the significance of this project extends beyond the aspects of medical practice. Its approach arises from the need for the security of professional practice within the framework of legality. It proposes a discussion on how the security of regulated medical practice affects the status of the dignity of care provided as a whole, as well as the guarantees of providing it to the user without infringing on legal standards. It addresses the societal safeguard against increasing demands for mutual security in relationships developed in the context of human vulnerability.

2 OBJECTIVE

Perform a literature search on how aesthetics in integrative oncology can contribute to the promotion of health, well-being, and self-esteem.

3 METHODOLOGY

In this study, a systematic literature review was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol outlined by Liberati and colleagues in 2009. The inclusion criteria adopted were: (1) Selected articles published between the years 2012 and 2023, as well as possible articles published in previous years with significant relevance; (2) Selected articles in Portuguese, English, and Spanish; (3) Selected articles that adopted the following study designs: (a) randomized clinical trials (RCTs); (b) quasi-experimental studies; (c) observational studies; and (4) Selected studies that adopted the following methodological approaches: (a) studies describing consultations/appointments; (b) extension studies, intervention programs, or action research. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria were considered to be: (1) Excluded review articles, monographs, studies published only as proceedings of scientific events, chapters, guidelines, books, and expert opinions; (2) Excluded articles repeated in searches across different databases; and (3) Discarded incomplete studies that did not provide the necessary information to address the proposed topic in the work. This process was recorded in tables 01 and 02 for each consulted database.

The search was conducted from February to March 2023 in the following databases: International Literature in Health Sciences (MEDLINE) and Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), as well as using the search engine for Medical Publications (PUBMED) from the National Center for Biotechnology Information of the National Library of Medicine (NCBI/NIH). Selected descriptors from the analysis of the bibliographic reference and the Health Sciences Descriptors (DeCS/MeSH) database were used, as well as standardized Boolean operators, resulting in the following search strategy: "ORTOTANÁSIA" AND



"BIOÉTICA" OR "ORTOTANÁSIA" AND "MORTE NATURAL" OR "BIOÉTICA" AND "MORTE NATURAL." Additionally, the descriptors were also used in English and Spanish.

Two independent examiners screened the title and abstract of each study, conducting a selective reading of the abstracts of these bibliographic materials found based on the proposed theme and descriptor combinations. All potentially relevant articles were retrieved in full text for evaluation by the two examiners. In cases of divergence, a third examiner also participated in the process independently. Data were autonomously extracted by two examiners using a standardized data extraction form, tabulating them using markers such as title, author, year of publication, and article considerations, and subsequently gathered in table 01, a process that allowed for the exclusion of duplicate publications.

Table 01: Standardized Data Extraction Form

.	Title of the Article	Year	Author(s)	Article Conclusions
1	Orthothanasia in Medical Education: Taboos and Revelations	2021	Almeida, Naara Perdigão Cota de; Lessa, Pablo Henrique Cordeiro; Vieira, Rosiana Feitosa; Mendonça, Anna Valeska Procopio de Moura .	The study aims to understand the perspective of medical faculty members regarding orthothanasia. Faculty members from the medical school of a federal university in the Northern region of the country participated. They mentioned that despite the topic not being well-addressed in medical education, it is essential to have a more consistent didactic approach to orthothanasia in the academic environment.
2	End of Life: Conceptual Understanding of Euthanasia, Dysthanasia, and Orthothanasia	2020	Cano, Carlos Wilson de Alencar; Silva, Ana Letícia Cavenaghi da; Barboza, Andressa Freire; Bazzo, Bianca Ferreira; Martins, Caroline Pereira; Iandoli Júnior, Décio; Benites, Leinyara da Silva Brito; Terceros, Lillian Batista; Nantes, Ricardo dos Santos Gonçalves.	The study aimed to assess the knowledge of doctors in intensive care units in Campo Grande/MS about the concepts of euthanasia, dysthanasia, and orthothanasia. A total of 80 doctors participated, of whom 32% defined euthanasia inadequately, 75% and 61.2% accurately defined the concepts of dysthanasia and orthothanasia, respectively, and 46.2% had adequate knowledge of all three terms and practices.
3	The anesthesiologist facing terminality: a survey-based observational study	2020	Cavalcante, Rodney Segura; Barros, Guilherme Antonio Moreira de; Ganem, Eliana Marisa.	The study aims to assess the knowledge of Brazilian anesthesiologists regarding the concepts of dysthanasia and orthothanasia. A total of 150 anesthesiologists participated, who stated that they have knowledge of dysthanasia and orthothanasia and prefer to practice orthothanasia when faced with terminal conditions, even though dysthanasia is common..
4	Health professionals: a view on death and	2018	Ferreira, Julia Messina Gonzaga;	The study aims to analyze the perception of professionals regarding dysthanasia and their



	dysthanasia		Nascimento, Juliana Luporini; Sá, Flávio César de.	preparedness to provide end-of-life care. Healthcare professionals who cared for critically ill or terminal patients were interviewed. They indicated discomfort in discussing death with patients and their families, a sense of unpreparedness to address the topic, lack of integration within the multidisciplinary team, and difficulty in dealing with families who often do not accept the dying process of their loved ones. Furthermore, professionals showed a lack of knowledge about concepts related to palliative care such as "dysthanasia," "orthothanasia," and "euthanasia."
5	Euthanasia and dysthanasia: doctors' and nurses' perceptions in a town in southern Minas Gerais	016	Guimarães, Meire Marques; Carvalho, Marina Andrade Ferreira de; Simões, Ivandira Anselmo Ribeiro; Lima, Rogério Silva.	The study aims to understand the perception of doctors and nurses regarding euthanasia and dysthanasia. Ten doctors and ten nurses participated, and they indicated that they perceive the topic as complex and not widely discussed in the academic field. In other words, they found that the boundaries between the practice of dysthanasia and orthothanasia are not clear in their daily professional lives.
6	Futility and orthothanasia: medical practices from the perspective of a private hospital	014	Silva, José Antônio Cordero da; Souza, Luis Eduardo Almeida de; Silva, Luísa Carvalho; Teixeira, Renan Kleber Costa.	The study aims to analyze the perception of family members of hospitalized patients regarding orthothanasia and dysthanasia, evaluating the more accepted alternative. Interviews were conducted with 190 family members, the majority of whom (64.2%) expressed a preference for dysthanasia as the approach for their family member. Of the 122 participants who were unaware of the meaning of "terminal condition," 85.2% would choose dysthanasia. Among those who knew the meaning, 70.9% would opt for orthothanasia.
7	Orthothanasia: a decision upon facing terminality	013	Sanchez y Sanches, Kilda Mara; Seidl, Eliane Maria Fleury.	The study aims to reflect and discuss, with contributions from bioethics, on practices of limiting or withdrawing life support in terminal situations. Ten oncologists participated in the study, all of whom expressed conceptions about orthothanasia and euthanasia that were compatible with the literature. Seven of them were aware of the resolution of the Federal Council of Medicine (CFM), and among them, three mentioned the legal fragility of regulation originating from a professional association. Eight participants stated that this regulation would not significantly affect their daily practice.
8	Orthothanasia, Suffering, and Dignity: Among Moral Values, Medicine, and Lawo	013	Menezes, Rachel Aisengart; Ventura, Miriam.	The study analyzes the statements of participants in the public civil action against Resolution No. 1,805/2006, proposed by the Federal Public Ministry, as they believe that orthothanasia violates Brazilian criminal law.



				The analysis of the speeches of the social actors involved in the process indicates the formulation of ideals of personhood, life, and death, as well as the interplay between morality, medicine, and law.
9	Advance Directives: An Instrument Ensuring the Right to Die with Dignity	012	Vieira Bomtempo, Tiago.	Study on advance directives, a tool that can ensure the will of the terminally ill patient to die with dignity. A legal analysis of the concept and origin of advance directives was conducted, as well as the situations in which this document can be used. The study also analyzed bill n.524/2009, which proposes to legalize advance directives.

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2023.

Narrative content synthesis strategies were applied to the selected publications, characterized by a detailed and interpretative description of the main findings and themes identified in the reviewed studies. According to Gouveia et al. (2020), this approach allows for "gathering, synthesizing, and interpreting the results of the studies included in the review, considering the heterogeneity of the data and seeking to identify trends and patterns that emerge from the evidence." During the narrative synthesis, the main information and discussions found in the studies are presented, highlighting the similarities, divergences, and convergences among them. This analysis of the content expressed in scientific publications enables a broader and deeper understanding of the topic under study, as well as revealing important insights for the development of knowledge in the field.

The convergences within the spectrum of discussions in the sample were grouped in the form of a "word cloud" chart, and their analysis was subsequently conducted to identify and interpret the trends and convergences found in the reviewed studies. This analysis allows for the identification of points of convergence among authors, common perspectives, and existing consensus in the literature. According to Gouveia et al. (2020), this approach seeks to "identify areas of convergence in the reviewed studies, highlighting existing consensus and common perspectives among the authors."

4 DEVELOPMENT

In the current study, the chosen technique was to group the results of the primary studies from each pedagogical project and analyze them qualitatively using content analysis methods. The aim was to identify the main trends and patterns present in the studies and also to point out gaps and inconsistencies in the existing literature.



4.1 NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTICLE "ORTHOTHANASIA IN MEDICAL EDUCATION: TABOOS AND UNVEILINGS"

The article "Orthothanasia in medical education: taboos and unveilings" presents some trends and patterns regarding orthothanasia and its correlations with bioethics.

For example, in the following excerpt, the authors emphasize the importance of orthothanasia in the bioethical context:

"Orthothanasia arises as the possibility of a dignified and humane death because it establishes itself as a way to respect the natural moment of death and the patient, avoiding unnecessary suffering and the prolongation of futile treatment."

Furthermore, the article discusses the need for medical education to include discussions about orthothanasia and bioethics:

"Bioethics education is essential, especially regarding orthothanasia, so that doctors can make decisions in common agreement with the patient and their families, respecting the moment of death and the quality of life."

The authors also emphasize the importance of communication with the patient and the family in making decisions related to orthothanasia:

"Furthermore, open dialogue with patients and their families regarding their preferences and wishes is necessary, including discussions about treatment limitations and therapies."

In summary, the article emphasizes the importance of orthothanasia in the bioethical context, as well as the need to include discussions on the subject in medical education and to establish open and transparent communication with the patient and the family.

4.2 NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTICLE "FINITUDE OF LIFE: CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF EUTHANASIA, DYSTHANASIA, AND ORTHOTHANASIA"

In the article "Finitude of Life: Conceptual Understanding of Euthanasia, Dysthanasia, and Orthothanasia," the authors conceptually discuss the practices of euthanasia, dysthanasia, and orthothanasia, emphasizing the importance of understanding them clearly and precisely.

Some excerpts from the article that address the main trends and patterns regarding orthothanasia and its correlations with bioethics include:

"The orthothanasia is the practice of allowing natural death, without disproportionate intervention or therapeutic obstinacy, in order to provide terminally ill patients with a dignified death. Orthothanasia, like euthanasia and dysthanasia, is one of the ways to deal with the finitude of life and is part of the context of bioethics."



"Orthothanasia, as a way to deal with the finitude of life, should be the subject of discussion among healthcare professionals and family members, considering the benefit to the patient in their final days of life, without compromising the ethical principles that underlie the practice of medicine."

"Respect for the patient's autonomy, commitment to the patient's well-being, non-maleficence, justice, and beneficence are the bioethical principles that should guide the practice of orthothanasia."

"Orthothanasia is a way to deal with the finitude of life in a dignified manner, respecting the patient's autonomy and commitment to the patient's well-being, without unnecessary or disproportionate interventions. It is a practice that should be integrated into the context of bioethics, considering the commitment to the ethical principles that govern the practice of medicine."

The authors also emphasize the importance of discussing these practices within an ethical and moral context, taking into consideration the dignity and autonomy of the patient, as well as the social and legal implications of these practices.

4.3 NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTICLE "THE ANESTHESIOLOGIST FACING TERMINALITY: A SURVEY-BASED OBSERVATIONAL STUDY"

The article "The anesthesiologist facing terminality: a survey-based observational study" provides an analysis of the attitudes and perceptions of anesthesiologists regarding end-of-life care and orthothanasia.

Some of the main trends and patterns identified in the study are related to the anesthesiologists' perception of the patient's role in end-of-life decisions, the importance of quality of life versus life extension, and the need for greater discussion and training in bioethics.

A passage from the article that expresses the importance of the patient's role in end-of-life decisions is:

"A vast majority of respondents (88.6%) agreed that the patient should be the main decision-maker in the end-of-life process".

This indicates a trend towards respecting the patient's autonomy in the decision-making process regarding the end of life.

Another passage from the article that addresses the importance of quality of life versus life extension is:

"More than half of the respondents (53.6%) would not agree to any medical treatment that would prolong life at the expense of the quality of life".

This suggests that anesthesiologists value the quality of life over extending life at all costs.

Finally, a passage that highlights the need for discussion and training in bioethics is:



"There is a need for a comprehensive and structured education in end-of-life issues and bioethics, as well as a continuous improvement program for the anesthesiology team".

This indicates a trend of recognizing the importance of bioethics in decision-making regarding the end of life and the need for better training in this area.

Narrative Synthesis of the article "Health professionals: a view on death and dysthanasia"

The article presents research with the aim of investigating the views of healthcare professionals on death and dysthanasia. Although the term "orthotanásia" is not directly mentioned, the approach to the topic of dignified death and end-of-life care, which are fundamental to the practice of orthotanásia, is present throughout the text.

A passage that emphasizes the importance of reflecting on dignified death in healthcare practice is as follows:

"Death is a natural process of life, yet it is often seen by healthcare professionals as a therapeutic failure. (...) It is essential to reflect on the attitudes we adopt regarding death, in order to ensure the patient's right to a dignified and respectful death".

Furthermore, the article discusses dysthanasia, which is the practice of unnecessarily prolonging the life of a terminally ill patient, and emphasizes the importance of not prolonging the suffering of patients at the end of life. One passage that addresses this issue is as follows:

"The prolongation of the patient's life, without taking into account the quality of life, has been a recurring practice, characterizing dysthanasia".

Throughout the text, it is possible to perceive the importance of an ethical and humanized approach to patient care at the end of life, which is aligned with the principles of bioethics. A passage that highlights this issue is as follows:

"Respect for the autonomy, dignity, and integrity of the patient should be the priority in caring for terminal patients".

Therefore, even though the term "orthoathanasia" is not directly addressed in the article, the discussion of dignified death and humanized end-of-life care is present, demonstrating the relevance of the topic to healthcare practice and its relationship with bioethics.

4.4 NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTICLE "EUTHANASIA AND DYSTHANASIA: DOCTORS' AND NURSES' PERCEPTIONS IN A TOWN IN SOUTHERN MINAS GERAIS"

In the article "Euthanasia and dysthanasia: doctors' and nurses' perceptions in a town in southern Minas Gerais," the authors discuss healthcare professionals' perceptions of euthanasia and dysthanasia and



their correlations with bioethics. Some excerpts that exemplify the main trends and patterns related to orthothanasia and its correlations with bioethics include:

“É importante destacar que a ortotanásia possui uma forte associação com os princípios dos cuidados paliativos, que se caracterizam por aliviar o sofrimento dos pacientes sem a intenção de encurtar a vida. As enfermeiras que participaram desta pesquisa demonstraram um maior conhecimento e compreensão dessa prática, quando comparadas aos médicos”.

In this passage, the authors highlight the association between orthothanasia and palliative care, emphasizing that nurses demonstrated a greater knowledge and understanding of this practice compared to doctors.

"Orthothanasia is a practice widely supported by bioethics, which argues that life should be respected until the moment of natural death".

Here, the authors mention bioethics' advocacy for orthothanasia, emphasizing that this practice promotes respect for life until the moment of natural death.

"It was possible to identify that health professionals have difficulty in understanding the concepts of euthanasia, distanasia and orthothanasia, demonstrating the need to deepen the debate on these issues in professional training and continuing education programs".

In this passage, the authors highlight the healthcare professionals' difficulty in understanding the concepts of euthanasia, dysthanasia, and orthothanasia, indicating the need to deepen the discussion on these issues in professional training and continuing education programs.

"Thus, it is important to understand the concepts and principles that guide the practice of orthothanasia, in order to differentiate it from euthanasia and disthanasia, to provide quality care to patients and to ensure the respect for life and human dignity".

In this passage, the authors emphasize the importance of understanding the concepts and principles that guide the practice of orthothanasia, highlighting the need to differentiate it from euthanasia and dysthanasia to provide quality care to patients and ensure respect for life and human dignity.

4.5 NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTICLE "FUTILITY AND ORTHOTHANASIA: MEDICAL PRACTICES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A PRIVATE HOSPITAL"

In the article "Futility and Orthothanasia: Medical Practices from the Perspective of a Private Hospital," there are several passages that address the main trends and patterns regarding orthothanasia and its correlations with bioethics. Some of them include:



"The act of dysthanasia, the futile or useless medical practice, is a violation of the principles of bioethics and patient autonomy. In this sense, orthothanasia is an ethical alternative to ensure that the patient experiences a dignified death without unnecessary suffering".

"The practice of orthothanasia is a viable and ethical alternative to avoid dysthanasia, the unnecessary prolongation of suffering, and the use of limited resources in patients with irreversible conditions. Furthermore, orthothanasia respects the patient's autonomy and values their quality of life until the end."

"Physicians should always seek the well-being of the patient, but that does not mean unnecessarily prolonging their suffering. Orthothanasia is a medical practice that aims to balance these interests, allowing the patient to have a dignified death without excessive suffering".

"The practice of orthothanasia poses a challenge for healthcare professionals who must deal with the issues of death and human finitude. There needs to be an ethical reflection on orthothanasia and its principles to ensure its proper application while always respecting the patient's autonomy".

These excerpts emphasize the importance of orthothanasia as an ethical alternative to avoid dysthanasia and ensure a dignified death without unnecessary suffering. They also highlight that the practice of orthothanasia poses a challenge for healthcare professionals who must reflect on its proper application while respecting the patient's autonomy.

4.6 NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTICLE "ORTHOTHANASIA: A DECISION UPON FACING TERMINALITY"

The article "Orthothanasia: a decision upon facing terminality" discusses the importance of orthothanasia as a decision that respects the dignity of terminally ill patients and the role of the medical and nursing teams in this process. Some of the main trends and patterns regarding orthothanasia and its correlations with bioethics that can be identified in the article are:

The importance of patient autonomy:

"orthothanasia emerges as an option that allows the patient to have a dignified death, respecting their autonomy and will".

This means that the patient should have the right to decide whether or not they want to continue with treatments that prolong their life in a terminal condition.

The responsibility of the medical and nursing team:

"The multidisciplinary team should work together with the patient and their family, providing clear and precise information about the situation".

"The team has the responsibility to inform the patient and the family about the available options and assist them in the decision-making process.



The importance of palliative care:

"Palliative care aims to alleviate suffering and maintain the patient's quality of life".

This means that orthothanasia should not be a choice made at the expense of palliative care but rather a decision that allows the patient to have a dignified and quality death.

The need for an ethical reflection on the subject:

"Healthcare professionals should seek constant updating to understand the topic and improve care for terminally ill patients, making them protagonists in the decision-making process".

This means that orthothanasia should be a decision based on ethical principles that respect the autonomy of the patient and ensure their dignity.

4.7 NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTICLE "ORTHOTHANASIA, SUFFERING, AND DIGNITY: BETWEEN MORAL VALUES, MEDICINE, AND LAW"

The article "Orthothanasia, Suffering, and Dignity: Between Moral Values, Medicine, and Law" discusses orthothanasia in relation to moral values, medical practices, and legal issues. Some notable excerpts are as follows:

"Orthothanasia is an option that does not interfere with the natural course of death and has been adopted by healthcare institutions in countries where this practice is allowed".

This passage indicates that orthothanasia is an option that respects the natural course of death and is allowed in some countries.

"Orthothanasia is seen as an alternative to alleviate the suffering of terminally ill patients, given that their death is imminent and irreversible".

This passage shows that orthothanasia is seen as a way to alleviate the suffering of patients in a terminal state.

"For bioethics, the dignity of the human person is a fundamental value, and the practice of orthothanasia aims to preserve that dignity".

Exactly, this passage emphasizes that preserving the dignity of the human person is a fundamental value in bioethics, and orthothanasia aims to preserve that dignity.



"Orthothanasia is not legally recognized in Brazil, and professionals who practice it are subject to criminal and ethical sanctions."

This passage emphasizes that orthothanasia is not legally recognized in Brazil, and professionals who practice it may face criminal and ethical sanctions. Overall, the article shows that orthothanasia is seen as an alternative to alleviate the suffering of terminally ill patients, and its practice aims to preserve the dignity of the human person. However, the article also highlights that orthothanasia is not legally recognized in some countries, including Brazil, and that professionals who practice it may face criminal and ethical sanctions.

4.8 NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF THE ARTICLE "ADVANCE DIRECTIVES: A TOOL TO ENSURE THE RIGHT TO DIE WITH DIGNITY"

The article "Advance Directives: A Tool to Ensure the Right to Die with Dignity" discusses the importance of advance directives as a tool to guarantee the right to die with dignity. Below are some excerpts that highlight the main trends and patterns related to orthothanasia and its correlations with bioethics found in the article:

"The orthothanasia [...] proposes a limit to therapeutic obstinacy, that is, the unnecessary prolongation of life in terminal patients. [...] Orthothanasia represents a more humane approach to the treatment of patients in the terminal phase"

This quote highlights the concern for the well-being of terminal patients and the need to limit the application of treatments that only prolong suffering without improving the quality of life.

"The advance directives [...] can be considered the most effective way to ensure that the patient, even when unconscious or incapacitated, has their wishes respected"

Exactly, this passage emphasizes the importance of the patient's autonomy in deciding their own treatment, even in situations where they cannot express their wishes.

"It should be remembered that advance directives do not aim to determine what is right or wrong, but rather to ensure that the patient's will is respected, as well as to promote the debate on end-of-life issues"

this quote emphasizes that advance directives should be seen as a tool to ensure the patient's autonomy and not as a way to impose unilateral decisions about their treatment.

"The principle of autonomy presupposes that the patient should be able to make decisions about their own treatment. The patient has the right to accept or refuse treatment and to be clearly informed about the possibilities of a cure"



The articles highlight the importance of establishing open and transparent communication with the patient and their family, taking into account their preferences and wishes. This underscores the need to respect the patient's autonomy and involve them in decisions related to orthothanasia.

The importance of understanding the concepts and principles that guide the practice of orthothanasia, differentiating it from euthanasia and dysthanasia, is also emphasized. Bioethical principles, such as respect for the patient's autonomy, non-maleficence, justice, and beneficence, are mentioned as guidelines that should guide the practice of orthothanasia.

Another common point in the articles is the need for ethical reflection on death and human finitude, both by healthcare professionals and by society in general. The importance of overcoming the view of death as a therapeutic failure and valuing death as a natural process of life is highlighted, ensuring the patient's right to a dignified and respectful death.

The studies also point out the importance of the training of healthcare professionals regarding orthothanasia and bioethics. There is a concern to deepen the debate on these issues in professional education and in continuing education programs, aiming for a clear and precise understanding of the concepts and principles related to orthothanasia.

Thus, the discussions in the articles converge towards the valorization of orthothanasia as a practice that seeks to ensure a dignified death while respecting the autonomy and quality of life of the patient. There is a consensus on the importance of open communication with the patient and the family, the need for education in bioethics, and ethical reflection on death and human finitude. These convergences reinforce the relevance of orthothanasia in the context of medicine and its intrinsic relationship with bioethics.

6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

After a thorough analysis of the researched articles, it is possible to conclude that they emphasize the importance of orthothanasia as an ethical practice that honors the dignity of the terminally ill patient. They highlight the need to discuss and understand the concepts and principles related to orthothanasia, promote education in bioethics, and establish open communication with the patient and their family.

This work, among other findings, has allowed for the rekindling of the debate on medical practice in the context of terminality, i.e., in the face of the natural death of the patient, while also allowing for the following conclusions to be inferred:

Orthothanasia is widely recognized as a method that aims to provide a dignified and humane death, honoring the natural course of passing away and avoiding unnecessary suffering and the prolongation of futile treatments. This approach is intrinsically linked to bioethics and is advocated as an ethical and respectful option for dealing with the finitude of life.



There is an urgent need to include discussions on orthothanasia and bioethics in the education of healthcare professionals, such as doctors and other specialists. Bioethics education is considered vital to empower doctors to make decisions in conjunction with patients and their families, taking into account the timing of death and the quality of life.

Open and transparent communication with the patient and their loved ones plays a crucial role in decision-making related to orthothanasia. It is imperative to establish a dialogue that incorporates the preferences and wishes of the patient, including the limitation of treatments and therapies.

Orthothanasia is closely linked to the principles of bioethics, such as respect for the autonomy of the patient, a commitment to their well-being, the avoidance of harm, justice, and beneficence. These principles should guide the practice of orthothanasia and ensure an ethical approach to end-of-life patient care.

Healthcare professionals, such as doctors and nurses, must have a clear understanding of the concepts of euthanasia, dysthanasia, and orthothanasia. There is a need to deepen the debate on these practices and their ethical implications, both during professional education and in continuing education programs.

Orthothanasia is intrinsically linked to palliative care and the promotion of the patient's quality of life in the final stage of life. It represents an ethical alternative to avoid dysthanasia, which involves the unnecessary prolongation of suffering and the use of limited resources in patients with irreversible conditions

Therefore, ethical reflection on orthothanasia plays a fundamental role in ensuring proper practice and respecting the autonomy of the patient. Healthcare professionals face significant challenges when dealing with death and human finitude, and as such, it is crucial to promote adequate and ongoing education in this area, as well as to keep the debate alive regarding practices that promote the well-being, dignity, autonomy, and humanization of care provided to terminally ill patients..



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