Supplementary Online Material - Table 1. Search strategies

Database and search strategy	Number of results
Ovid MEDLINE(R) ALL 1946 to May 02, 2023 (Terminally Ill/ OR exp Terminal Care/ OR "Hospice and Palliative Care Nursing"/ OR Hospices/ OR Palliative Care/ OR Palliative Medicine/ OR (Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end ADJ3 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) ADJ3 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))).ab,ti,kf. OR ("1049 9091" OR "1472 684X" OR "1357 6321" OR "1536 0539" OR "0825 8597" OR "1557 7740" OR "1552 4264" OR "1478 9523" OR "1477 030X" OR "0749 1565" OR "0742 969X" OR "1544 6794" OR "0941 4355" OR "1873 6513" OR "0145 7624" OR "1091 7683" OR "0030 2228").is.) AND (Altruism/ OR (Altruis* OR prosocial* OR pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR self-transcend* OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*).ab,ti,kf.) NOT (exp animals/ not humans.sh.) *Search for ISSNs based on: CareSearch. Palliative Care PubMed Searches [Internet]. Adelaide SA: CareSearch, Flinders University; [updated 2021 Sep 1; cited 2023 May 5]. Available from: https://www.caresearch.com.au/tabid/6870/Default.aspx*	**762** (3 May 2023)
Embase.com ('terminally ill patient'/exp OR 'terminal care'/exp OR 'palliative nursing'/de OR 'hospice'/de OR 'palliative therapy'/exp OR 'hospice nursing'/de OR 'dying'/de OR (Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end NEAR/3 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) NEAR/3 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))):ab,ti,kw OR (10499091 OR 1472684X OR 13576321 OR 15360539 OR 08258597 OR 15577740 OR 15524264 OR 14789523 OR 1477030X OR 07491565 OR 0742969X OR 15446794 OR 09414355 OR 18736513 OR 01457624 OR 10917683 OR 00302228):is) AND ('altruism'/de OR 'self transcendence'/de OR 'universalism'/de OR 'prosocial behavior'/de OR (Altruis* OR prosocial* OR pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR self-transcend* OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*):ab,ti,kw) NOT ([animals]/lim NOT [humans]/lim) NOT 'conference abstract'/it *Search for ISSNs based on: CareSearch. Palliative Care PubMed Searches [Internet]. Adelaide SA: CareSearch, Flinders University; [updated 2021 Sep 1; cited 2023 May 5]. Available from: https://www.caresearch.com.au/tabid/6870/Default.aspx*	**766** (3 May 2023)
CINAHL EBSCO ((MH "Terminally Ill Patients+") OR (MH "Terminal Care+") OR (MH "Hospice and Palliative Nursing") OR (MH "Hospices") OR (MH "Palliative Medicine") OR TI(Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end N2 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) N2 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))) OR AB(Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end N2 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) N2 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*)))) AND ((MH "Altruism") OR (MH "Self	**348** (3 May 2023)

Transcendence") OR TI(Altruis* OR prosocial* OR pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR self-transcend* OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*) OR AB(Altruis* OR prosocial* OR pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR self-transcend* OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*))	
Ovid APA PsycInfo 1806 to April Week 4 2023 (terminally ill patients/ OR exp palliative care/ OR hospice/ OR (Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end ADJ3 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) ADJ3 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))).mp.) AND (altruism/ OR prosocial behavior/ OR (Altruis* OR prosocial* OR pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR self-transcend* OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*).mp.)	**1122** (3 May 2023)
Cochrane Library Wiley: **Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews Issue 5 of 12, May 2023** **Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials Issue Issue 5 of 12, May 2023** (Palliative* OR Hospice* OR (Support NEXT Care*) OR (Supportive NEXT Care*) OR (Comfort NEXT Care*) OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end NEAR/3 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) NEAR/3 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))):ab,ti,kw AND (Altruis* OR prosocial* OR (pro NEXT social*) OR (social NEXT behavior*) OR (social NEXT behaviour*) OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR (self NEXT sacrific*) OR (helping NEXT behavior*) OR (helping NEXT behaviour*) OR (self NEXT transcend*) OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*):ab,ti,kw	**79** (3 May 2023)
Web of Science Core Collection TS=((Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR "Dying" OR "EOL" OR ("end" NEAR/2 ("life" OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR "incurable") NEAR/2 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR "sick" OR "care" OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))) AND (Altruis* OR Prosocial* OR Pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR "Humanitarianism" OR Selfless* OR Self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR Self-transcend* OR Selftranscend* OR Benevol* OR "Universalism" OR "Generosity" OR Unselfish*))	**633** (3 May 2023)
ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global (PQDTGlobal) NOFT((Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR "Dying" OR "EOL" OR ("end" NEAR/2 ("life" OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR "incurable") NEAR/2 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR "sick" OR "care" OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))) AND (Altruis* OR Prosocial* OR Pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR "Humanitarianism" OR Selfless* OR Self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR Self-transcend* OR Selftranscend* OR Benevol* OR "Universalism" OR "Generosity" OR Unselfish*))	**188** (3 May 2023)
Philosopher's Index EBSCO (TI(Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end N2 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) N2 (stage* OR patient*	**36** (3 May 2023)

OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))) OR AB(Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR dying OR EOL OR (end N2 (life OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR incurable) N2 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR sick OR care OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*)))) AND (TI(Altruis* OR prosocial* OR pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR self-transcend* OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*) OR AB(Altruis* OR prosocial* OR pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR Humanitarianism OR Selfless* OR self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR self-transcend* OR selftranscend* OR benevol* OR universalism OR generosity OR unselfish*))

Sociological Abstracts ProQuest (MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Palliative Care") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Hospices") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Terminal Illness") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Dying") OR TI(Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR "Dying" OR "EOL" OR ("end" NEAR/2 ("life" OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR "incurable") NEAR/2 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR "sick" OR "care" OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*))) OR AB(Palliative* OR Hospice* OR "Support Care*" OR "Supportive Care*" OR "Comfort Care*" OR "life threatening" OR "life limiting" OR "Dying" OR "EOL" OR ("end" NEAR/2 ("life" OR stage* OR disease*)) OR ((terminal* OR advance* OR "incurable") NEAR/2 (stage* OR patient* OR ill* OR "sick" OR "care" OR disease* OR cancer* OR condition*)))) AND (MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Altruism") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Humanitarianism") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Universalism") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Helping Behavior") OR TI(Altruis* OR Prosocial* OR Pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR "Humanitarianism" OR Selfless* OR Self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR Self-transcend* OR Selftranscend* OR Benevol* OR "Universalism" OR "Generosity" OR Unselfish*) OR AB(Altruis* OR Prosocial* OR Pro-social* OR "social behavior*" OR "social behaviour*" OR "Humanitarianism" OR Selfless* OR Self-sacrific* OR "helping behavior*" OR "helping behaviour*" OR Self-transcend* OR Selftranscend* OR Benevol* OR "Universalism" OR "Generosity" OR Unselfish*))	**135** (3 May 2023)	

CareSearch Grey Literature Database
https://www.caresearch.com.au/tabid/6241/Default.aspx

Query	Results
(altruism) OR altruist	4
("self transcendence") OR selftranscendence	1
(prosocial) OR "pro social"	0
("social behavior") OR "social behaviour"	0
humanitarianism	0
selfless	1
"self sacrifice"	1
("helping behavior") OR "helping behaviour"	0
benevolence	3
universalism	0
generosity	4
Unselfish	0

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(3 May 2023)

Supplementary Online Material - Table 2. The role of altruism in reviewed articles

Authors	Aims	How "altruism" is used in the article	Method to identify or measure altruism
Battin (1985)	To discuss how others deciding in the patient's best interest but without the patient tends "to preclude altruistic choice on the part of the patient."	"Patient altruism" is the main focus of the publication.	Does not apply
Braun et al. (2014)	To describe self-reported decision-making styles and associated pathways through end-of-life decision-making	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors identify two main decision-making styles, deciding for oneself and letting others decide, leading to five variants: Autonomists, Altruists, Authorizers, Absolute Trusters, and Avoiders	Qualitative analysis
Chochinov & Julião (2021)	To discuss the involvement of young people in dignity therapy	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider how young people engage in producing dignity therapy documents for altruistic reasons.	Does not apply
Coward (1990)	To examine the psychosocial resources through which women with advanced breast cancer manage stress associated with disease and treatment	"Patient altruism" is used as contextual background information but is not the main focus or used to describe other phenomena.	Does not apply
Coward (1991)	To examine the relationships among self-transcendence, emotional well-being, and illness-related distress in women with advanced breast cancer	"Patient altruism" is used as contextual background information but is not the main focus or used to describe other phenomena.	Does not apply
Coyle & Sculco (2004)	To explore the meanings and uses of an expressed desire for hastened death in patients living with advanced cancer	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider that one of the meanings that the expression of desire for hastened death had for patients was that of an altruistic gesture.	Qualitative analysis
Davies (1993)	To explore the importance of altruism as motivation for individuals to ask for medical help to die if they become incurably ill and find their suffering intolerable	"Patient altruism" is the main focus of the publication.	Does not apply
Doukas & Hardwig (2014)	To propose "patient-informed choice for altruism" as a method that allows patients to make medical treatment decisions that take into consideration the impact of their decisions on others	"Patient altruism" is the main focus of the publication.	Does not apply

Fanos et al. (2008)	To explore meaning of hope in individuals with ALS	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors discuss altruism as a way of coping with illness.	Qualitative analysis
Fegg et al. (2008)	To assess the feasibility, acceptability, and psychometric properties of English and German SMILE (Schedule for Meaning in Life Evaluation)	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors show that altruism is on 12th position as importance for palliative care patients and for control group with no advance disease.	SMILE questionnaire (altruism is a subscale)
Fegg et al. (2010)	To compare meaning in life in palliative care patients with a representative sample of the German population	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors refer to altruism as a dimension contributing to meaning in life	SMILE questionnaire (altruism is a subscale)
Foley et al. (2007)	To identify the meaning of quality of life and to consider how the experience of health care affected perceived wellbeing	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider altruism as a way to give meaning to quality of life.	Qualitative analysis
Gates (1988)	To discern the meanings, experiences, and orientations related to care and cure and to examine the influences of hospice and hospice	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Author considers altruistic care from patients towards relatives, health professionals or other patients.	Qualitative analysis
George (2007)	To assess the reasons for which women decide for euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Author considers that women's decisions for assisted death display an acquiescence to gendered expectations of feminine altruism and the pressures of caregiving.	Does not apply
Gunderson & Mayo (1993)	To discuss the rationales permitting physician assisted death law: autonomy, avoidance of suffering, death with dignity, and also altruistic reasons; and extending the law to terminal and non-terminal illnesses.	"Patient altruism" is the main focus of the publication.	Does not apply
Hartogh (2018)	To discuss three contentions to the proposition that people who are old and ill have a 'duty to die', i.e. to refuse life-saving treatment or to end her own life, when she is dependent on the care of intimates and the burdens of care are heavy.	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Author considers that a refusal of care that leads to death can only be seen as altruistically motivated when the refusal is linked with inevitable and quick death and no other second decision is needed.	Does not apply
Ironson (2007)	To look at psychological predictors of slower disease progression over time in a longitudinal study comparing long-term survivors of AIDS and a group of people who had HIV with a normal course of the illness	"Patient altruism" is the main focus of the publication.	NEO Personality Inventory Revised

Jankofsky et al. (1983)	To identify and discuss altruism as a basic trait of human character and behavior in relation to death.	"Patient altruism" is the main focus of the publication.	Does not apply
Kissane et al. (2004)	To evaluate the application of Supportive-Expressive Group Therapy for women with advanced breast cancer	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider that the creation of a book by a group of patients as an altruistic gesture destined to help others better understand the illness journey and for creating a memorial for family and friends.	Qualitative analysis
Laranjeira et al. (2022)	To explore how hope is experienced in dyads formed by end-of-life patients and their family carers.	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider altruism as a facilitator of hope.	Qualitative analysis
Lavazza & Garasic (2022)	To discuss the moral insights behind the priority of "important patients" in urgent care and suggest a supererogatory solution of voluntary renunciation/withdrawal.	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors refer to altruism to describe the reason for which, in emergency situations, patients might renounce or refuse treatment in favor of others.	Does not apply
McGonnigal (1997)	To reflect on the consequences of euthanasia	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Author considers that altruism can be a motivation for euthanasia in order not to overload the relatives, but it should not be allowed for financial issues.	Does not apply
Nissim et al. (2012)	To provide an understanding of a prolonged experience of advanced cancer, as seen through the eyes of dying individuals	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider that through altruism patients create a living legacy that makes a positive impact on the lives of others.	Qualitative analysis
Schroeder (2005)	To reflect on the distinction between suicide and self-sacrifice, with its connotations of altruism	"Patient altruism" is the main focus of the publication.	Does not apply
Tzounis et al. (2016)	To gain af COPD patients' perceptions of spirituality and religiosity and explore the importance of practicing their beliefs	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors show that some participants equate spirituality with an act of altruism.	Qualitative analysis
Vachon et al. (2009)	To review empirical literature on spirituality at the end of life and to create an integrative and inclusive definition of spirituality	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors associate altruism with being spiritual.	Qualitative analysis

Valdes-Stauber et al (2021)	To quantitatively compare the dimensions and factors of the Daseinsverabschiedung theory between dying people in palliative care and people in other stages of life, and to examine the dimensional structure and the psychometric properties of the AFEQT questionnaire	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors discuss altruistic preoccupations of dying patients. Also, altruism is a sub-dimension of the AFEQ questionnaire	AFEQ (altruism is a subscale)
Vilhauer (2009)	To examine the helping processes in online groups for women with metastatic breast cancer	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider that altruism can be beneficial because tit can reduce demoralization and boost self-esteem.	Questionnaire used to assess group experiences (altruism is a subscale)
Wajid et al. (2021)	To explore the advantages of hospice care from the perspectives of advanced cancer patients living in hospice centers.	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors show that patients felt altruistic because of the help they received at the hospice.	Qualitative analysis
Wasner et al. (2008)	To discuss the sources of resilience among ALS patients	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider altruism as a protective factor for ALS patients.	Does not apply
Wysocka et al. (2021)	To investigate the connection between spiritual transcendence, meaning in life, altruism, and the quality of life of cancer patients in end-of-life care in Poland	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider altruism as a resource that patients have.	MQOL-R, the Scale of Spiritual Transcendence, the Purpose in Life Questionnaire PIL-6, The Altruism Scale
Yalom & Greaves (1977)	To describe the impact of group therapy for patients with metastatic cancer	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. Authors consider altruism as a factor that helps therapy group members.	Does not apply
Zhang et al. (2022)	To explore the meaning of life and end-of-life coping strategies among patients with advanced lung cancer	"Patient altruism" is used to explain or describe other phenomena of interest. The authors refer to altruism as a sub-component of the meaning of life.	Qualitative analysis