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INVITATION to the Public defence of

Anne VAN DRIESSCHE

To obtain the academic degree of

'DOCTOR OF SOCIAL HEALTH SCIENCES'- VUB 'DOCTOR OF HEALTH SCIENCES' - UGENT

Pediatric advance care planning for adolescents with cancer and their parents : the BOOST intervention and lessons learned

The public defence will take place on

Monday, 25 November 2024 at 5 p.m.

In Auditorium Vanden Driessche

VUB Health Campus

Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussels

and can be followed online, accessible through the following link:

https://gf.vub.ac.be/redirects/PhD_defense_Anne_Van_Driessche.php

Summary of the dissertation

This dissertation aimed to develop and evaluate a pediatric advance care planning (pACP) intervention for adolescents with cancer and their parents through a multi-center randomized controlled trial (RCT). This aim was addressed by an iterative development approach, which incorporated several methods, including semi-structured interviews with healthcare professionals, consultations with pACP experts, a scoping review of the existing literature, development of a logic model based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, and testing the materials and components with adolescents with cancer and their parents. These methods resulted in the development of the BOOST pACP (Benefits of Obtaining Ownership Systematically Together in pediatric Advance Care Planning) intervention. Following the development of the intervention, a multi-center parallel-group superiority trial was conducted to evaluate the effects of the BOOST pACP intervention on parent-adolescent communication and behavioral determinants of ACP communication (i.e. attitude, self-efficacy, intention, behavior). Additionally, the dissertation aimed to provide guidance for future interventions by exploring how to tailor approaches to optimize communication and care for children with serious illnesses, which could benefit pACP initiatives, as addressed through a scoping review. To further enhance understanding of the challenges and strategies in conducting RCTs of psychosocial interventions for children with cancer and their parents, a collective case study was performed, consisting of semi-structured expert interviews with principal investigators and research staff members of seven recent or ongoing RCTs.

Curriculum Vitae

Anne van Driessche is a researcher with a Master's degree in Health Education and Promotion, as well as a second Master's in Global Health. Before starting her doctorate, she worked as a researcher at the Municipal Health Service Zeeland and Julius Center for Health Sciences and Primary Care (UMC Utrecht). In September 2018, she began her PhD at the End-of-Life Care Research Group, focusing on the development and evaluation of a pediatric advance care planning intervention for adolescents with cancer. This project is a collaboration between the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Ghent University and is supported by a grant from the Research Foundation Flanders and Kinderkankerfonds.