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| Study | Aims of Study | PerspectiveNo. of Participants | Treatment | Data Collection Method | MethodologyTheory | Analysis | Summary Decision-Making Findings |
| Agard24, 2007 | To explore patient experience and role in first-time ICD implantation decision  | Patients(n=31) | ICD | Semi-structured Interviews | Content Analysis | Content  | ICD decision is based on basic understanding of severity of health event. Side effects and function of the device is worth the health benefits and extension of life. |
| Blumenthal-Barby31,2015 | Investigate the LVAD decisional process and needs of patients and caregivers. | Patients(n=15)Candidates(n=15) caregivers(n=15) | LVAD | Structured Interviews | Grounded TheoryOttawa Decision Framework | Thematic  | LVAD patients and caregivers described feeling that with death of as an alternative there was no choice to make. The treatment didn’t require deliberation but was based on trust in the physician and their beliefs about valuing family and life. Participants desired support from their care team and patients and who had faced the same decision. |
| Bruce30, 2015  | Gain understanding why patients refuse LVAD and how their refusal may evolve. | Patients (decliners)(n=21) | LVAD | Structured Interviews | Ottawa Decision Framework | Not stated | Patients who declined LVAD did so viewed it as experimental, were concerned the device would restrict their lifestyle and that it would affect their HTx candidacy. Participants described deciding quickly but nearly half later accepted the VAD. |
| Kirkpatrick32, 2015  | To characterize the QOL of caregivers of patients with LVAD-DT and identify burdens and stressors  | Caregivers(n=42) Providers(n=27) | DT LVAD | Interviews | Mixed MethodsGrounded Theory | Thematic  | Caregivers are important part of decisional process and often unexpectedly are forced to make the decision for critically ill patients. The decision is experienced with anxiety and uncertainty. |
| Kitco25,2013 | Describe the DT LVAD implantation experiences of AHF patient spouses  | Spouses(n=10) | DT LVAD | Semi-structured interviews | Inductive | Thematic  | The decision implant LVAD is described as a component of the caregiving role and a distinct timeframe. Caregiver experience throughout the decision and outcomes of the therapy effected caregivers’ feelings about the decision.  |
| Kitco33, 2016  | To examine pre-implantation decision making and post-implant expectations of LVADs | Patients(n=15) | LVAD | Semi-structured Interviews | Longitudinal, QualitativeSecondary analysis | Descriptive thematic  | Patients marked the pre-implantation phase as a time during which they felt they had no choice, or only a life/death choice. Following post-implantation evaluated their outcomes and had unmet expectations. Following implantation patients also began questioning the next phases of their decision, such as when they might receive a HTx. |
| Matlock28, 2010 | Describe patient perceptions surrounding difficult decisions along with factors that influence their decisions. | Patients(n=22) | Difficult Decisions(including ICD and LVAD) | Semi-structured Interviews | Not statedSecondary Analysis | Descriptive thematic | Participant decisions were described as either active or passive. Passive decision makers tended to prefer others make the decision and described a process and guided the decision. |

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| Study | Aims of Study | PerspectiveNo. of Participants | Treatment | Data Collection Method | MethodologyTheory | Analysis | Summary Decision-Making Findings |
| Matlock9, 2011 | To understand cardiologists’ and patients’ perspectives about decision making surrounding ICD implantation | Patients(n= 20, 6 declined)cardiologists(n=11) | ICD | Semi-structured Interviews | Patient centered care  | Constant comparative  | Cardiologists vary in their approach but consider the guidelines and take a patient-centered stance to the process. Patients a desire to follow doctor recommendations and avoid death. In recalling the process some patients felt there was key information that they did hear or understand until after implantation. Participants who declined cited doubting the device would help them and wanting to avoid the burden of unnecessary or unhelpful treatment. |
| McIlvennan26, 2014  | To understand decision-making experiences of DT LVAD patients | Patients(n=22, 7 declined) | DT LVAD | Semi-structured Interviews | Ottawa Decision Support  | Mixed inductivedeductive | Participants either felt there was no choice to be made or deeply considered the decision. Participant choices were influenced by relationships, illness severity, clinicians, spirituality and finances.  |
| McIlvennan11, 2015 | To understand VAD coordinators view of the AHF decision-making process | VAD Coordinators (n=18) | DT LVAD | Structured Interviews | Ottawa Decision Framework | Descriptive | Coordinators view the decisional process as patient-centered, though the programs varied in their approach to providing it. Ideally, the decision should be a slow, iterative, multidisciplinary process. |
| McIlvennan27, 2015 | To understand caregiver experiences and needs when making decision about DT LVAD | Caregivers (n=17) | DT LVAD | Semi-structured Interviews | Ottawa Decision Support Framework | Mixed inductivedeductive  | The AHF decision can follow years of coping with ill health and caregivers sometimes are left on their own to decide due to the patient’s health. Participants described feeling tensions between hope and reality, their wishes for the decision and respecting their loved one’s autonomy. |
| Ottenberg23, 2014 | To understand patients perception of their care from pre-implant through post-implantation of DTVAD | Patient(n=12) | DT LVAD | Semi-structured Interview | None noted | Thematic  | Discussions with clinicians were central to patient decision-making. Post-implantation required a recalibration of expectations. |

Table 2. Review study characteristics and summary of findings. DT LVAD=destination therapy left ventricular assist device, HTx= heart transplantation, ICD=implantable cardiac defibrillator, LVAD=left ventricular assist device