Do dying patients get a raw deal by being denied their right to potentially health-promoting investigations, interventions and support?

I worked for many years in specialist oncology and palliative care units, and then joined a specialist team serving a general hospital and community setting.

An unexpected and challenging aspect of my new role was battling with preconceived prejudice towards patients requiring palliative care. It became apparent to me that staff from a variety of disciplines sometimes ‘wrote off’ these individuals. There is much evidence that dying patients are frequently avoided and marginalised.

Patients are referred to our team because of unresolved issues such as...