

opportunity to establish a key collaborative relationship in the delivery of health care.

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POSTER

Informed participation in randomized clinical trials for cancer patients; perspectives from a research nurse

W. Hompus¹, T.J.P. Pronk¹. ¹Erasmus MC Daniel, Oncology, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Background: Research nurses have several responsibilities for cancer patients who receive treatment within the conduct of trials. In general, they inform patients about the standard therapy, provide information about treatment in a research trial and address the issue of participation in a trial. An important question is how participation of these patients in research trials can be improved. What kind of information does a cancer patient need to make an accurate decision? And what substantial role do research nurses have in the process of decision-making?

Clinical relevance: An educational programme for consent administrators may help to reduce disparities in research participation by improving communication between research staff and potential participants.

Materials and Methods: Literature search (Pubmed, cochrane, psychlit) with the following strategy between 2000 – present, gave the following hits: information-cancer-trials-communication-nurse research nurse-information-clinical trials-cancer patients-recruitment cancer patients-trials-understanding-research nurse The reference list of the selected publications will be searched for further relevant literature.

Results: For accurate decision making patients need essential information about the various treatment options, which should refer to the patients education level and knowledge. The suggesting was made that patients with better knowledge (e.g. higher education) to randomized trials had a more favourable attitude towards participation in randomized clinical trials. Audiovisual methods can be considered as intervention to inform patients before they give their consent. This method also appeared to reduce anxiety and improved patients knowledge and understanding. Give a patient reasonable time for giving their consent.

Conclusion: The current process for informed consent for research is not standardized and inadequate. Researchers are urged to consider a formal training programme for members of their research teams who will be obtaining participants' consent.

Sufficient time and attention for patients needs are indispensable for good decision making. The research nurse has additional value and is more equipped to inform patients for participating in trials. The research nurse is more approachable and can obtain the confidence of patients.

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POSTER

The development of a European breast care nursing post basic curriculum

D. Fenlon¹, M. Eicher², S. Marquard³, I. Kadmon⁴, S. Claassen⁵, E. Pennery⁶, Y. Wengstrom⁷. ¹University of Southampton, School of Health Sciences, Southampton, United Kingdom; ²University of Basel, Institute of Nursing Science, Basel, Switzerland; ³University of Witten/Herdecke, Institute of Nursing Science, Witten, Germany; ⁴Haddaseh Medical Centre, Breast Cancer Centre, Jerusalem, Israel; ⁵Catharina Hospital, Dept of Surgery, Eindhoven, The Netherlands; ⁶Breast Cancer Care, Clinical Director, Londond, United Kingdom; ⁷Karolinska Institutet, Division of Nursing, Stockholm, Sweden

Background: This project was initiated and funded by EONS in response to a need for European guidelines on the training of specialized health professionals dealing with cancer and for nurses working with people affected by breast cancer. Using the EONS Cancer Nursing curriculum as a basis a curriculum was developed for training nurses to care for women with breast cancer.

Materials and Methods: An expert panel of six senior breast care nurses from throughout Europe was convened. A literature search was conducted and members of the panel provided a broad range of literature, policy documents and curricula from throughout Europe. These were reviewed and distilled into a curriculum which could be applied across Europe. Literature from the rest of the world was used where appropriate and compatible with European breast care nursing, particularly curriculum development work from Australia. The expert panel met to discuss the curriculum and core underlying values. The issues discussed and agreed upon were: the role of the breast care nurse, levels of practice, role titles, aims of the curriculum and length and structure of the required curriculum. The curriculum was written and developed in English. Each member country needs to utilise this document as a basis for preparing education in their own language, adapting the curriculum to be culturally and linguistically appropriate locally.

As the provision of and access to nursing education throughout Europe is highly variable it was decided to prepare a curriculum for nurses working at a post-basic level. Further work is recommended to design curricula for nurses working at an advanced level.

Results: A curriculum was developed at diploma/degree level to provide 4 European Credits (ECT), comprising 40 hours of contact time and 80 hours private study and clinical practice. The curriculum has been prepared as a set of practice based competencies and learning outcomes. A nursing model was utilised to draw up the indicative content, which takes the experience of the patient as the starting point and framework.

Conclusions: This curriculum is a welcome step in improving and standardising the nursing care of people with breast cancer throughout Europe. The curriculum may also be used as a benchmark for training breast care nurses against which educational institutions and programmes can be measured.

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POSTER

Suffering – difficult to define but recognisable

H. Davies¹. ¹University of the West of England, Health Care Science, Bristol, United Kingdom

Background: Suffering is the individual's response to circumstances that befall them and are perceived to have a negative impact. Nurses aim to help patients integrate suffering into their lives, which requires a deep understanding of the patient. Arguably, what suffering means to palliative care nurses will determine the focus and practical aspects of their care.

Method: The study was guided by the ideas of hermeneutic phenomenology. Thirty one palliative care clinical nurse specialists working in south and mid Wales were interviewed to determine their understanding of suffering. Interviews enabled the exploration of their experiences and views. The data was analysed using the principles of phenomenological interpretation.

Findings: The palliative care nurse specialists had difficulty articulating the concept of suffering but their descriptions, often using clinical scenarios, mirrored the literature. Their understanding of suffering influenced their care management.

Conclusion: Education about suffering may enable palliative care nurses develop skills and knowledge in the care of patients who are suffering and help in identification of suffering in practice.

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POSTER

Can we talk about sex at the Radiotherapy unit?

I. Moegelien¹. ¹Karolinska Universitetssjukhuset, Oncology/Radiotherapy department, Stockholm, Sweden

Background: Cancer and radiotherapy (RT) often changes quality of life for patients. Symptoms of dry mucous membranes, diarrhea, pain and fatigue can affect sexuality negatively. Regardless of the target area, body image and self-image could change and cause sexual problems. Staff members often express that they have little or no experience of raising issues on sexuality in a natural way and that there are no guidelines to follow. The staff of the Radiotherapy Unit (RTU), Karolinska University Hospital has taken the initiative to deal with the difficulty of talking to patients about sexual problems in connection with RT. We have since a couple of years, nurse-led an out-patient clinic for men and mainly patients with prostate cancer. There is no equivalent for female patients.

Aim: To improve the nurses and nurse assistants' knowledge and skill to assess and support cancer patients regarding sexual issues related to RT and cancer disease.

Methods: Workshops for all staff at RTU including students.

The project is implemented as a quality improvement project, with a number of activities. Three lunch seminars for all nurses in the RTU have been held during the winter/spring 2009. Discussion in relation to the cases resulted in a plan for implementation of new guidelines based on the PLISSIT model [1], including tools for improved communication. Cases (patient-nurse) with several possible scenarios, group work and discussions are tested tools to improve communication skills.

This is an on going project and it will be evaluated in a follow-up workshop and by using a questionnaire to all participants.

The results will be analysed in the autumn 2009.

The poster will present the different approaches and the content of the guidelines.

References

- [1] Annon, J. (1976). *The PLISSIT model: A proposed conceptual scheme for behavioral treatment of sexual problems*, Journal of Sex Education Therapy.