

THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2001

*Multidisciplinary approach***Special Lecture**

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Communication - the foundation in collaborationS. Wilkinson. *Royal Free & University College, Head of Caring Services, London, United Kingdom*

Collaboration is both an attitude and an interpersonal process that combines co-operation and a spirit of working together. Nurses in cancer care are part of a multidisciplinary team, consisting of individuals who have received different training but who are required to work together to achieve a mutual goal - good patient care. Such working together means collaboration, a word derived from the latin laborare, meaning "to labour with". A labour it has frequently been! The historic dissonance between disciplines and within the discipline of nursing itself has never served the profession well. All too often there has been opposition, power struggles and petty status competition. Collaboration is a means of ending such battles and enables health professionals to provide comprehensive, efficient, good quality care. Good collaboration recognises each member's presence, skills and unique talents and generates effective teamwork, less staff stress and increases patient satisfaction. One of the key elements of achieving collaboration is effective communication - good communication within disciplines, across disciplines and with patients. This paper will explore models of collaboration; appraise the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of collaboration; review the implications of team working in cancer care; identify the effects of poor communication and highlight methods of improving communication skills. Practical strategies for handling examples of difficult situation in the clinical area will be demonstrated.

Plenary Round Table

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The Nurse-Doctor CollaborationA. Costa. *Fondazione Salvatore Maugeri, Division of Breast Surgery, Pavia, Italy*

Collaboration among health professionals (and between doctors and nurses in particular) represents a winning force against cancer. Mutual recognition on the different roles is essential to give patients the best possible care. Only collaboration can guarantee that continuity of care which is vital for the patient: proper transfer of information, reciprocal listening, mutual support are mandatory to cover a 24 hour assistance to the sick person who needs gold standard treatments but also information and psychological support, evidence based medicine but also state of the art nursing, technologically advanced cures but also human warmth.

Doctors need to receive more education in communication and psychological support. They should also be trained to a closer interaction with nurses in the decision making process. On the other hand, the difference in salary and career opportunities is nowadays in Europe one of the main obstacle to a greater assumption of responsibility by the nurses and to the establishment of a stronger interaction with doctors. Special educational programmes to promote multiprofessionality are required.

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The power and challenge of collaboration: the contribution of psychologists to (psycho)oncologyR. Sanderma. *University of Groningen, Northern Centre for Healthcare Research, Groningen, The Netherlands*

Within the field of care for patients and care for professionals, psychologists can contribute in several ways, i.e. through: (1) delivering additional psychosocial care to patients, (2) training of healthcare professionals in communication skills and improving skills to detect distressed patients who could need additional psychosocial care, (3) providing care to cope with

workstress of healthcare professionals, and, (4) psychological research which increases - among others - our understanding of coping with cancer. When presenting, some ideas will be given how psychologists can contribute to the quality of healthcare by delivering their expertise, which will highlight the points indicated. It is felt that, apart from the traditional tasks of psychologist, i.e. treating patients and doing research, there is a challenge to collaborate with other professionals, in order to increase competence of healthcare professionals in several areas. This can be done by delivering training both in special workshops and 'on the job' and by giving support to handle the stress and thereby reduce burn-out. To maximise spin-off, it is important that psychologists do not take a by-stander position, but intensify their collaboration with both medical doctors and nurses. By and large, it will be argued that by collaborating with other healthcare professionals and by putting in specific expertise related to the areas identified, psychologists can have a highly valued input to the area of (psycho)oncology.

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Shake hands with the octopus: collaboration with the oncology nurseP.R. Olsen. *Aarhus University Hospital, Department of Oncology, Aarhus, Denmark*

The oncology nurse is a key-person in coordinating the care of the cancer patient. She is close to the patient and is often the only one among the professionals whose position makes it possible to follow the patients through the hospital system and to get a deeper impression of the patient and his experiences. This position and the education of the nurse gives her the challenge to arrange all things - great and small - for the benefit of the patient. She becomes "the glue" that makes it all stick.

To succeed in this role she is dependent on collaboration, both with the patient, the relatives and other professionals from the multidisciplinary staff.

This collaboration is crucial. It is the only way to develop cancer care and to carry-out qualified and reasonable care of the patient in the clinic. Collaboration is also essential because of the increasing complexity of