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POSTER

The informational needs, satisfaction with communication, and psychological status of primary caregivers of cancer patients receiving chemotherapy

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Purpose: The main objective of the study was to identify the specific informational needs of primary caregivers of cancer patients receiving chemotherapy in a Greek outpatient setting and to assess their preference for cancer-specific booklets, their levels of satisfaction with communication and their psychological status.

Methods: Seventy-eight primary caregivers participated in the study and data were collected by structured individual interviews. Psychological distress was assessed using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS).

Results: The data indicated that caregivers' need to have more information was high especially regarding the aftermath of chemotherapy (76.6%), prognosis (63.7%), how chemotherapy worked (57.2%), how to deal with an emergency (52.2%), daily precautions (51.9%), and patient's psychological support (50.7%). In addition, the majority of caregivers (83.3%) expressed a great preference for cancer-specific printed material relevant to patients' condition and management. Caregivers were found to be either satisfied or very satisfied with doctor's affective behavior (97.4%) but less satisfied with doctor's information giving (64.1%). Finally, 55.1% of the participants experienced severe anxiety and 53.8% severe depression. Univariate analyses suggested that women, older and less educated caregivers, partners, and those living with the patient were more likely to report higher levels of psychological distress than were other groups of caregivers.

Conclusion: The results suggest that the Greek cancer caregiver needs more factual information relevant to the patient's condition and that communication of information is critical if he or she is to be satisfied. The Greek oncologist should therefore not only try to detect the informational needs, but should also be qualified to meet them in the best possible way. In addition, the rates of anxiety and depression observed highlight the need for a more thorough evaluation and management of caregivers' psychological morbidity in the Greek oncology setting.

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POSTER

The future of nursing: a source of anxiety

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In the Netherlands, there are increasing numbers of nurses and allied health care professionals who leave the health care system for employment in other sectors (1997: 6.1%, 2000: 7.3%). A shortage of available personnel combined with a high degree of absenteeism due to illness and decreased inflow of high school graduates into nursing schools is a source of anxiety for the future of nursing and society as a whole.

The Netherlands Council of Nursing Organisations (LCVV) reported in December 2000, that the main reasons why nurses leave the care system are insufficient provision of professional development programs and few opportunities for career growth.

The Nursing project team in The Netherlands Cancer Institute/Antoni van Leeuwenhoek hospital (NKI/AvL) have addressed this problem by initiating a project to prevent the outflow of nursing personnel from the medical and surgical divisions. The project team has developed a vision statement for oncology nursing which has been implemented using clinical ladders as well as methods for assessing the personal and professional needs of nursing personnel.

This presentation will address our vision statement for oncology nursing, its implementation and preliminary evaluation. In addition, the new levels of nursing competencies, from nurses' aids to nurse practitioners will be presented as well as its impact on nursing education in Holland. The goal of this presentation is to spur dialogue between professionals in order to create innovative ways to develop the nursing profession into an enticing career possibility.

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POSTER

The needs of family members of cancer patients when they are in hospital

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Objective: Identify the needs of family members of cancer patients when they are in hospital. **Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to describe and explore the needs of the family members of the cancer patients when they are in hospital. **Design:** Descriptive, explorative and qualitative study. **Participants:** Family members of cancer patients who could be classified as primary caregivers. **Outcome Measures:** Individual semistructured interview. **Results:** A group interpretative process was used to code, categorize and identify themes found in the transcribed interviews. Three categories of needs were identified: needs that outcome of the relationship with the patient; needs that outcome of the relationship with the nurses and factors that condition with the family members needs. **Conclusions:** The analysis of the findings indicate that the relatives of the cancer patients who are hospitalised, show needs of identification and satisfaction so important as the needs of these patients. The subjects of this research refer the needs to continue: care, attend and communicate with the patient in hospital. They also need a closer relationship with nurses that were referred to as a better orientation, information, support and effective communication. The factors that condition these needs are: none fulfil of the visiting hours rules; bad physical condition of the accommodation; lack of staff; hospital functional structure; acknowledgement of the nurses role; lack of disposability.

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POSTER

Nursing care: a source of anxiety

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In the Netherlands there's an increasing number of nurses and supporters of care who leave the care system to find a job in other branches (1997: 6.1%, 2000: 7.3%). Combined with a high percentage of absenteeism and a decreasing inflow of people into de nursing training schools does give misgivings for the near future.

In a rapport of the LCVV, December 2000, the main reasons for leaving the care system are the lack of possibilities to develop talents in a career perspective.

In the recent past several hospitals tried, without success to work with nurses from other countries. Communication is one of the most important tools in our profession especially in oncology nursing.

In the Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI/AvL) we started a project to affect and prevent the leaving of nurses out of the hospital/profession.

During the presentation we will clarify the startingpoints as carevision, the new education program in Holland and the development of nurse practitioners. The approach of the NKI/AvL will be presented as well as the first results. We hope that the presentation will be a motive to stimulate the discussion how we will be able to keep and make the nursing profession attractive now and in the future.

Gender specific issues

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POSTER

A study of the factors involved in decision making when women are offered choices of surgical treatment for breast cancer between mastectomy and breast conserving surgery

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Introduction: In the treatment of primary breast cancer it is recognised that breast conserving surgery (BCS) is suitable treatment for some breast cancers. Studies assessing surgical practice show wide variation with women treated with BCS in one centre who would be treated by mastectomy in another. If surgical treatments provide comparable long-term survival rates and women are offered choices of surgery, other factors in decision making other than concern for breast conservation must be involved. Following an audit showing 60 mastectomies and 25 BCS were performed, this study