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POSTER

Patients' satisfaction: physical environment makes sense

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Background: In order to promote health services we provide, we should care for what our patients care for. In this way and through the feedback they supply us with, we can improve the quality of health cares more efficiently.

Methods: In a cross-sectional study in Jahad Breast Clinic in Tehran, Iran, all 425 consecutive patients from July to November 2000 were studied. They were asked to fill in a questionnaire, containing open and closed questions. The questions were categorized to four groups assessing the patients' satisfaction in 4 different aspects and analysis was performed followingly.

Results: The average age of the patients was 40.15 years (SD=12.03). 96 percent of the patients reported their satisfaction of the clinic working hours and 82% considered the services accessible. More than half of the patients expressed their complete satisfaction of their physicians (their consideration in physical examination, giving necessary information and providing them with helpful consultation). 80% of the patients reported their overall satisfaction of the clinic.

There was a significant correlation between the patients' overall satisfaction of the clinic and of the physical environment ($r=0.766$). The correlation between the former and the patients' satisfaction of the personnel's attitudes also proved to be significant ($r=0.665$).

The correlation between the former and the patients' satisfaction of their attending surgeon and between the former and administrative affairs were significant too. (with $r=0.627$ and $r=0.653$ respectively)

Conclusion: Although each aspect of a clinic can play a role in satisfying the patients, we observed a stronger relationship between patients' satisfaction of the physical environment and their overall satisfaction. The impression that the physical environment of the clinic makes on the patients, should be considered more seriously.

Symptom relief/Supportive care

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POSTER

Patients experiences of selectron treatment, an exploratory study

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Purpose: To explore and describe the experiences of 5 women with cervical cancer, following selectron treatment. It was aimed at better understanding the impact of selectron treatment for women as part of their cancer treatments, and to highlight areas in nursing care which may be improved.

Methods: Qualitative analysis was carried out following tape-recorded semi-structured interviews of 5 women with cervical cancer following selectron treatment. All having had external beam radiotherapy, for up to 6 weeks prior to selectron treatment. The tapes were transcribed, and themes identified by way data reduction, the research was influenced by phenomenology philosophy.

Results: Three main themes were identified from the study: Lack of preparation, patients' expectations of care and the discomfort of selectron. It was found that patients' experiences of selectron treatment are greatly influenced by the amount of preparation and explanation they receive. What was also apparent was the lack of patient support given on discharge.

Conclusion: Patients receiving selectron treatment need to be adequately prepared for the physical and psychological effects of the treatment. The study also allows a greater understanding of patients' thoughts and feelings following adjuvant treatments for cervical cancer. The study shows implications for further nursing research to validate these findings. The development of an audit tool would further highlight areas of improvement, and address the long-term needs of women having selectron treatment.

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POSTER

A study of the effect that aromatherapy massage has on reducing anxiety in patients with primary malignant brain tumours who are attending their first post radiotherapy follow-up appointment

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Purpose: Research suggests that aromatherapy massage is being increasingly used by cancer patients, although few studies have evaluated its effectiveness. This study was undertaken to determine whether aromatherapy massage is able to reduce anxiety in patients with a primary malignant brain tumour, attending their first follow-up appointment post-radiotherapy.

Methods: Eight patients were recruited to the study, which was conducted at the neuro-oncology out-patient clinic at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh. The study was quasi-experimental in design and included three methods of data collection: the measurement of blood pressure, pulse and respiratory rate; the completion of Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scales (HADS) and semi-structured interviews.

Results: The results from the HADS did not show any psychological benefit from the aromatherapy massage. However, a statistically significant reduction in all four physical parameters (systolic blood pressure, diastolic blood pressure, pulse and respiratory rate) was found, suggesting that an effect on the autonomic nervous system was made, inducing relaxation. This was supported by the patients' comments during the interviews, as they all stated that they felt "relaxed" following the aromatherapy massage.

Conclusion: As these patients are faced with limited treatment options and a poor prognosis, this intervention would appear to be a positive way of offering support and improving quality of life.

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POSTER

Farming and care, a solution for a lot of people

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A care farm is somewhere people with a need for care or help are offered a place to recover, to work and/or to live. The unique feature of most of the farms is that the agricultural objective of running a working farm forms the basis for the provision of care.

Purpose: The aim of this project is to bring about a functional redistribution of care tasks between town and country through the creation of high quality farming care. This extension of agricultural business enhances care and welfare facilities in the country to such an extent that it has a positive effect on those in need of care.

Methods: The appointment of a nursing co-ordinator by 'den Hâneker', the society for agricultural nature and landscape management, agrotourism and agricultural health care, allows the combination of farming and care to become a valuable addition to the health care services in the area. The nursing co-ordinator creates, together with the farmers, care places on farms, maintains a network with care institutions in the region to identify where there is a need for care, and to match the supply and demand. Care is provided to a variety of people who need it, such as people with a mental handicap, psychiatric clients, ex-addicts etc. This provides a response to the demand and the need of the target group by offering a useful daytime occupation with rhythm and regularity provided by the farmers. Old, possibly become demented, people with a farming background, or an affinity with life in the country, can be returned to a familiar environment where they feel at home. Voluntary care providers can have a short period of rest and regularity so they can recharge their batteries. There is also an opportunity for children with cancer, together with their parents or care providers, to enjoy a short period of life on a farm in close contact with animals and the farmer and his wife. Next step is to offer people with cancer an opportunity to take a step back from all their courses of treatment by staying on a care farm.

Result: Effective daytime occupation, the provision of rest and regularity, and an opportunity to recharge one's batteries, all appear to be the keywords in this form of care.

Conclusion: A number of people in need of care, in the widest sense of the word, benefit greatly from this form of care. They feel the quality of life improves considerably.