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POSTER

Incidence and severity of side-effects experienced by patients with lung cancer receiving chemotherapy treatment

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Purpose: Despite lung cancer being recognised as a major disease there is little empirical evidence in the literature assessing patients' perception of chemotherapy toxicity. Therefore, a quantitative study has been conducted to examine the incidence and severity of side-effects experienced by patients with lung cancer receiving chemotherapy to identify the most frequent side-effects for these group of patients.

Methods: A descriptive cross sectional research design was used to obtain data from six cycles of chemotherapy treatment. Data from the same patients were obtained from only two consecutive points.

Twenty four patients with lung cancer participated in the study: 16 males and eight females. Data was gathered by means of a self-complete questionnaire (WCQ-75) listing 63 possible side-effects. Participants completed the questionnaire after the administration of two consecutive cycles of treatment. They graded the severity of each side-effect and also the worst side-effect over the chemotherapy treatment. By means of a statistical analysis of the questionnaires, incidence, severity and the most troublesome side-effects experienced by the patients were identified. The correlation level between incidence and severity of those side-effects was calculated.

Results and Conclusion: The results of the study showed that the 63 side-effects listed in the questionnaire were experienced by the patients at least once during the treatment and five additional side-effects were added to the list by the patients. Fatigue was the most frequent (mean incidence=96%), severe (moderate to bad) and the troublesome problem for the patients. Physical weakness, breathlessness, constipation and alopecia also appeared to be significant problems. Participants also ranked nausea as one of the most troublesome side-effects overall. These results support that the side-effects of cancer treatment experienced by the patients are essential in oncology and they have to be into account in nursing care.

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POSTER

The effect of acupuncture treatment on the incidence and severity of hot flushes experienced by women following treatment for breast cancer: a comparison of traditional and minimal acupuncture

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Hot flushes have been found to be a significant problem for women who have been treated for breast cancer. Hormone replacement therapy is often effective in controlling these symptoms but there is still uncertainty about its' role in women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Breast care nurses are frequently consulted about effective ways of dealing with hot flushes but there is little published literature on this subject. The use of complementary therapies among cancer patients is becoming increasing popular and gradually becoming acceptable alongside orthodox treatment.

This study set out to test the effectiveness of acupuncture as an intervention for hot flushes that occur as a result of treatment for breast cancer using a randomised controlled trial. Two methods of administering acupuncture were compared; traditional and minimal acupuncture. Twenty women had taken part in the study at the time of the interim analysis; ten women were randomised to each group. They received four treatments of acupuncture recording the number of hot flushes experienced in daily diaries in the week before treatment, the week after, and at one month following completion of the treatment. Visual analogue scales were used to measure embarrassment, problem, distress, interference with routine and severity factors associated with hot flushes. Quality of life was measured by the FACT-ES tool with particular emphasis placed on the endocrine subscale (ES).

No significant results were achieved, as the number in the sample was only a quarter of the total number estimated to give significance. There was an encouraging trend for the number of hot flushes to reduce and larger numbers are needed to test acupuncture as a treatment for hot flushes. The research method chosen was appropriate to answer the study's question but the study highlighted some aspects that could be strengthened for the future.

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Using a collaborative approach to measure patient satisfaction of supportive care throughout the breast cancer journey

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The quality of clinical practice and clinical governance are key elements of health services of the future (Department of Health, 1997).

Whilst the involvement of Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) in the provision of patient care has already been shown to improve quality of care (Kai ? Chung Chuk, 1997), this paper ? pertaining to a collaborative nursing audit provides additional evidence of this.

This audit is an example of using collaboration and user opinion to develop evidence based practice. Two hundred and twenty five anonymous questionnaires were sent to the clients of nine CNSs in Breast Care. The CNSs were based in five separate, but geographically close Breast Care Nursing Services. The response rate to the questionnaire was 77.3%.

The data to be presented, is part of this patient satisfaction survey, which measures client opinion of their Breast Care Nursing Service.

The survey targets patients from their diagnosis of Breast Cancer throughout their primary treatments.

This paper will consider one element of the role of the CNS in Breast Care from a service users viewpoint (ie. Accessibility).

The questionnaire's overall results demonstrated a high level of satisfaction for clients when contacting their Breast Care Nursing Service. The experience of collaboratively undertaking this audit was found to be of benefit to the CNSs who participated, and to their delivery of care.

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POSTER

Touched by the fairy

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In the entry of the new millennium, nurses must be prepared to offer new treatments, new methods in nursing practice. The purpose of this poster is to enhance the touch as a complement to other treatments and as a way to magnify the nurse/patient relationship.

This presentation includes a poem that describes a patient needs and feelings related to touch.

Nurses share more intimate moments with patients than other caregivers. We tend their bodies over several hours.

Touch is the most basic human answer. It's non-invasive, non-intrusive. It's an instrument of help. It provides peace, tranquillity and reliance.

The use of touch is a nursing intervention that can create harmony. It provides pain, stress and anxiety relief. Some patients describe pain relief for longer periods of time.

Nurse practice is moved by empathy, dedication and it can improve the patient quality of life.

Touch gives a new dimension to nursing practice. It increases self-knowledge and sensibility in order to care for the patient as a whole.

Effective nursing practice in the new millennium will require innovative and creative nurses who can adapt themselves to change in order to find holistic, individualised, specific care.

This poster provides a baseline knowledge level for nurses to start addressing the use of touch.

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