

Poster Session

Continuity of care

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POSTER

Lost in a foreign land and searching for help? The role of the oncology nurse coordinator.

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Being diagnosed with cancer is much like arriving in a foreign country where you do not speak the language. How do you get where you want to go and find what you need? Good planning can overcome these obstacles, however a diagnosis of cancer arrives unexpectedly, often leaving families feeling as if they have been hit by a bus, rather than catching one. How does a family in such an environment find their way?

The role of the nurse coordinator at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, which was first introduced in 1998, has evolved to the point where today the four coordinators act as "tour guides" for the approximate 180 children diagnosed with cancer each year, in addition to those patients who have completed treatment, relapsed or are palliative. In order to be the "expert" guides required for such an arduous journey, the coordinators care for children from diagnosis specific groups, that is bone marrow transplant, brain tumour, solid tumour, and leukaemia. The appropriate coordinator joins the family at diagnosis and accompanies them to journey's end, wherever that may be, preparing them for each transition along the way.

The care of children with cancer is complex and involves a multidisciplinary approach from a diverse range of health professionals and departments. The roles and responsibilities of the oncology nurse coordinator include; the overall coordination of both medical and psychosocial support the development and provision of educational resources, heightening awareness of childhood cancer, strengthening relations with the community.

This paper aims to present and explore the unique aspects of the role of the oncology nurse coordinator and the impact that this has for both the team and most importantly the family.

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POSTER

Port catheters: the incidence of complications. A multicentric approach

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Background: Totally implantable central venous access port systems are widely recognised as a main supportive factor in cancer treatment. Despite the many advantages of these devices, patients as well as caregivers can experience complications (thrombosis, occlusion, infection, extravasation, ...). Accurately developed procedures and guidelines can help nurses reduce these complications. In Belgium there is a whole range of different procedures regarding maintenance of ports. The lack of uniformity led to the start of a multicentric study. A study design was developed to get an idea of the incidence of different problems (such as blood withdrawal occlusion) and complications (such as infection) in the different hospitals. The registration started at the insertion procedure (e.g. insertion technique, which vein was accessed ...). The patient was asked to fill out a diary to keep track on the functioning of the catheter per needle insertion. If problems occurred the nurse was asked to specify the problem and the measures taken. The ultimate goal is to support evidence based nursing.

Materials en Methods: A prospective descriptive study is carried out in 14 different hospitals in Flanders (Belgium). First patients were included in December 2001, registration is ongoing. The results of a convenience sample of more than 900 patients were analysed. Correlations between e.g. underlying disease, frequency of needle insertion and complications (malfunctioning, infection, thrombosis and extravasation) were studied.

Results: Preliminary results will be presented.

Conclusions: Conclusions based on the preliminary results will be presented.

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POSTER

Networking - transfer of knowledge network of contact nurses in the Oslo region for patients with cancer and other serious diagnosis

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The purpose of the network is co-operation between nurses in hospital, homecare and nursing home in such a way that the cancer patient and other patients with serious illness and their next of kin get the experience of confidence in all the levels of the public health service.

The contact nurse network has been established with the background of regional health plan for region east (the counties Hedmark, Oppland, Østfold and Oslo). It is also based on the National cancer plan of 1998.

A steering committee has been appointed for this network, and the committee consists of nursing leaders and nurses from hospitals, hospice, private care institution, homecare, nursing home and The Norwegian Cancer Society.

To reach the goal of this network the participants have, in a common agreement, committed themselves to carry out their tasks, as follows:

The steering committee has committed itself to:

- To arrange theme days
- Act as resource group for the nurses in the network
- Contribute to inform about scientific literature and offers of interest for patients, relatives and nurses
- To arrange collaboration seminars between politicians and leaders in the public health service.

The contact nurses in the network have committed themselves to:

- Act as resource persons in the cancer care
 - To be updated on relevant information for patients and relatives
 - Stimulate and organize training and spread scientific information on their working place
 - Participate on the themedays
 - Give information to the network when they end their function
- The employers have committed themselves to:
- Give the contactnurse the possibility to carry out their function within ordinary working hours
 - Give the contact nurses the possibility to participate on the theme days within ordinary working hours
 - Refund the expenses connected to the theme days have a contact nurse present on their workplace at any time

Means to reach the goal:

- Contact nurses on all levels in public health where cancer patients are treated
- Upgrade the contact nurses with skills so that they can act as resource persons in cancer care
- Make use of existent serviceoffer and possibly develop new offer
- Crossprofessional co-operation
- Develop means to transfer competence between the different levels of the public health
- Contact whit current userorganization

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POSTER

The use of complementary therapies among breast and prostate cancer patients in Finland

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The study describes the use of complementary therapies (CTs) among breast (women) and prostate (men) cancer patients in Finland. The data were collected using a self-administered postal questionnaire.

Responses were received from 216 women (response rate 54,9%) and