with and without infections) in the two periods, and time to first bacteremia after insertion of tunnellated CVC will be presented for the two periods.

1226 POSTER

Dying with dignity - care giving to dying cancer patients in hospitals.

C. Brejnebøl[1], M. Grindsted[2]. [1] *Herlev University Hospital, Denmark, Department of Oncology 54c3, Herlev, Denmark;* [2] *Herlev University Hospital, Department of of Gynaecology, Herlev, Denmark*

Introduction: In Denmark 60% of terminal cancer patients end their lives at a hospital department. To nurse dying cancer patients requires experience as well as personal and professional qualifications at a very high level. In the absence of agreed upon standards, the nursing of dying cancer patients depends on the skills and experience of the individual nurse. This inevitably results in a very diversified quality of the care giving. Purpose of the study The main objectives of the study were to clarify · what kind of knowledge nurses utilise in the caring of dying cancer patients · which qualifications are required, by the nurses, in order to give professional care · whether or not the understanding, by the individual nurses, of a decent and acceptable death does correspond to the prevalent definitions in the literature.

Methods: The study group interviewed nurses from four different departments. In order to optimize the interaction the nurses were interviewed in groups – a qualitative method of research. The outcome of the interviews were then compared to the findings of literature studies.

Conclusion: The interviews combined with the findings of literature studies demonstrate that there is a lack of agreed upon principles and standards for care giving to dying cancer patients in hospitals. It is therefore recommended that such principles and standards should be developed in order to improve the nursing.

1227 POSTER

Verification of set up deviation with tangential post operative irradiation technique using electronic portal imaging in clinical practice.

Z. Khoshbakht[1], A.-S. Skoglund[1], L. Beckman[1], A. Bjoreland[2], L. Franzen[1]. [1] *Sundsvalls Hospital, Oncology, Sundsvall, Sweden;* [2] *Sundsvalls Hospital, Hospital Physics, Sundsvall, Sweden*

Background: Until May 2002 the only radiotherapy department in northern Sweden was situated in Umeå. The reception area covered 225 000 km^2, over 55% of the country area. The population of this area is only ca. 900 000.

In order to reduce the need for long distance patient transport and to be able to offer a good qualitative radiation treatment to patients unable to travel long distances a radiation treatment department in Sundsvall in the southern part of the region has been built up.

Patient conferences with Umeå are held using a videoconference system and common patient information and check and confirm systems are used in order to make transfer of patient data fast and secure.

One of the most common treatments given in Sundsvall is tangential postoperative breast irradiation

The aim of this study was to determine set-up deviations during treatment in Sundsvall with tangential breast irradiation technique using an Electronic Portal Imaging system (Elekta, iViewGT).

Material and methods: Treatment simulation in Sundsvall is done using virtual simulation and all patient information in the Sundsvall clinic is digital, partly because of the common patient conferences. The patient fixation and CT-scanning, for target determination and virtual simulation (GE, advantage SIM), are made in Sundsvall and the CT-data is sent to Umeå for dose calculation. The setup parameters from the dose calculation system are then stored in the common database for use in Sundsvall.

Setup verification is made using an EPID system with an amSi detector. Image matching is made by comparing the field DRR from the virtual simulation system to the EPI using the digital matching tools in the EPID system.

The radiation treatment department in Sundsvall is a complete department with oncologists, radiation therapists, physicists and technicians. This means that the joint center, apart from dose planing, works as a cooperation between independent clinics rather than main and satellite clinic.

34 patients have been treated with tangential postoperative breast irradiation between August 2002 and February 2003 and were enrolled in this study.

Results: The result of set-up accuracy varied depending the treatment sessions but were well inside the tolerable values that were set up. The mean setup deviation and the corresponding standard deviation (1 SD) of the systematic and random errors for this technique, measured in the plane orthogonal to the beam axis, ranges from 2.5 ± 1.6 mm to 3.6 ± 2.3 mm depending on treatment session.

Conclusions: These results show that set-up deviations in breast cancer patients treated with tangential technique are negligible in clinical practice. They can be attributed to systematic errors as well as random errors due to patient movement and breathing. Patient fixation and immobilization techniques together with experience and skill of the treatment staff is crucial in minimizing random errors.

Education

1228 POSTER

Cancer clinical trials and nursing practice

H.M. Vrehen[1], P. Tjia[2]. [1] *University Medical Center Utrecht, Hematology, Utrecht, The Netherlands;* [2] *University Medical Center Utrecht, Medical Oncology, Utrecht, The Netherlands*

Introduction:

Improvement of cancer treatment is achieved by clinical trials (CT). This implies that treatment is given in accordance with medical research protocols and the requirements of Good Clinical Practice. Based on the view that nurses have a group responsibility for the precise execution of clinical trials, working groups of nurses from medical oncology and hemato-oncology, in the University Medical Center Utrecht (UMCU), translated this into nursing practice. The procedure required a new impetus, due to changes of staff and the resulting loss of know-how. In 2002 an educational program was developed. The nationwide blueprint Nursing Practice and Clinical Trials' (Vrehen, Weterman, Van Zanten, 2001), issued by the Netherlands Oncology Nursing Society, was used in this context. The Framework of Nursing Research Protocols', developed in the UMCU, is part of this.

Methods: All nurses are trained in CT with a basic course and a continuing education program. The course has covered the basic principles, the legal background of CT, and the procedures of the working groups. The participants were actively involved in the course, with a quiz to test their knowledge; they were also asked to identify bottlenecks in working practice.

Results: Following on from the CT course, working group members were then responsible for on-the-job training of all nurses. Organisational measurements were taken: (1) bottlenecks are tackled in a multidisciplinary context. (2) The working groups offer up-to-date overviews for each specialisation. These include all medical and nursing protocols, either in preparation or already approved. (3) The organisation is displayed in the flow diagram Protocol Routing, with the procedures for the development of nursing protocols in conformity with medical protocols.

Conclusion: Nurses feel involved in CT. Nurses demonstrate co-responsibility for CT by completing the nursing protocol before the start of a CT. Nursing care is delivered in accordance with the nursing protocol. There is a continuing education program for new CT initiatives. The quality of nursing protocols is regularly tested. The intention exists, within the region, to collaborate by way of (electronic) exchange of nursing protocols.

1229 POSTER

Emotional processing - how nurses survive emotionally while caring for cancer patients

A. Sandgren, H. Thulesius, K. Petersson. *Kronoberg County Research Centre, Växjö, Sweden*

Background: Nurses have a key position in caring for cancer patients. This involves facing patients and relatives in crisis, ethical difficulties in decision making, insufficient symptom control, as well as dealing with dying. A great deal of emotional and sometimes personal involvement, which can be distressing, is required. The aim of this study was to explore the main concern of nurses caring for cancer patients and develop a theoretical model of their way of resolving it.

Material and methods: In this grounded theory analysis of 46 interviews, mostly with registered nurses, we explored how these difficulties were dealt with. The interviews were coded and compared, yielding concepts and categories. Theoretical memos of the relationship between codes and categories were written and later sorted according to Glaser.

Results: Emotional processing emerged as a core strategy by which nurses managed their everyday life, and consisted of five main dimensions; shielding, confirmation seeking, chatting, self-reflecting and postponing. Shielding is when nurses protect themselves against strong emotions either