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HEALTH EDUCATION FOR ELDERLY CANCER PATIENTS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE. R. Borgers, A. Visser. Rijksuniversiteit Limburg, Postbus 616, 6200 MD Maastricht, Netherlands.

The "health education matrix", consisting of four phases, i.e., problem-analysis, analysis of determinants, intervention and evaluation, has been used to study the literature on health education for elderly cancer patients. Problem analysis reveals that an increasing number of elderly Dutch cancer patients are using hospital services. Elderly cancer patients appear to experience more problems relating to disease experience, medication non-compliance and health education than do younger cancer patients. The literature gives an indication that disease experience and medication non-compliance of elderly cancer patients is negatively influenced by their education-seeking behaviour. (= information-seeking and discussing emotional problems) In the analysis of the determinants it is suggested that the characteristics of the elderly and the negative opinions of health care workers concerning the elderly, play an important role in health education for elderly cancer patients. Successful health education intervention programmes for elderly patients have already been developed and evaluated in other countries. However, there is evidence to suggest that such studies lack a satisfactory theoretical framework. The adjusted attitude behaviour model of Fishbein and Ajzen will be used to explain the education-seeking behaviour of elderly cancer patients, on the basis of the influences of attitudes, perceived social norms and personal effectiveness.