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## Keynote lecture

1365

### **ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION IN CANCER CARE**

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Professional cancer care depends on communication skills in the team. The nurse's role is central, often responsible for identifying and making priorities of psychosocial and existential needs and interventions. Eight years of group-counselling for nurses at the cancer clinic in Trondheim confirm the central aspects in communication that the nurses find difficult to deal with. Quality of life, often the challenges in palliative cancer care, raises many communication-dilemmas.

*The following issues will be discussed:*

- Should we tell or should we not tell bad news? Why should we, to whom, how, when?

- How can nurses deal with, and be able to "translate" the suffering process?

- What is "professional nursing" in cancer care? How do we develop a trained eye and sensitive ear for the individual? Close, but not too close,—personal, but not private.

- How do we strengthen hope in our hospital culture?

- How do we communicate meaning to dying patients?

- Team decision making. The nurse's role in the team,—communication in the multidisciplinary team with different ethical and philosophical standards.

- The nurse's own "suffering" and grief in cancer care. Is it possible to be a "burning" helper for years?

- The difference and importance of both personal and professional qualifications. The right sort of gap between ideals and performance.

- Different arguments and cross-cultural aspects of information in Europe.

Experiences in cancer care show the needs for better knowledge, clinical training and standards in communication. The nurse's own value system and job satisfaction is essential. The need for clinical counselling and more structured education in communication is necessary.