

1396

POSTER

Evaluation of a standard for emotional support for outpatients in a regional cancer centre in the UK

J. Pratt, J. Brook, N. DeZeeuw, V.R. Bulusu, A. Wetherall, M.V. Williams.
Patient Education & Information Group, Oncology Centre, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, CB2 2QQ, UK

Aim: To cover all aspects of emotional support, six separate standards were written. Evaluation was therefore complex. In a prospective audit, the provision of emotional and psychological support to 1600 cancer patients was evaluated.

Methods: Four questionnaires were prepared from the amalgamation of the six support standards and given to 1600 cancer patients. Anonymity was respected. The results were analysed focussing on the environmental variables on consultations and patients' perception of the service provided.

Results: 60% response rate achieved: consistent with the published data. Table presents the responses to selected questions relevant to the analysis.

Question Responses in %	Yes	No	No resp.
Nurse/radiographer present during consultation?	95	5	0
Given time/opportunity to ask questions?	92	5	3
Verbal explanation offered after consultation?	89	8	3
Communication needs met during consultation?	83	2	15
Additional support/time offered after consultation	78	16	6
Nurse answer phone services useful?	74	5	21
Written information offered after consultation?	29	42	29

Conclusions: The evaluation has shown that cancer patients, generally, were satisfied with the support service provisions. Areas of concern were identified and changes are being implemented to improve the services. The feedback on written information has led to development of a structured information package for the cancer patients.

1397

POSTER

Patients preferences for and satisfaction to a breast care nurse specialist

G. Shingler, S. Smith, R. Thomas. *Primrose Oncology & Breast Audit Unit, Bedford Hospital NHS Trust Bedford MK42 9DJ, UK*

Purpose: Breast Care Nurse Specialists (BCNS) provide emotional support & information for patients & their families. A higher proportion of the patients time is spent with the nurse rather than other medical staff. We perceive this an advantage but there is little published data on the reaction of patients & families.

Method: Questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 50 patients taken from the BCNS register of patients seen following diagnosis of malignant disease. Quality indicators were used to assess aspects of the BCNS' service. These included patient contact with the BCNS before surgery, ease of contact, receipt of information, their level of understanding of their illness and treatment, management of their problems, the way feelings were addressed and satisfaction with the breast prosthesis fitting service.

Results: 30 questionnaires were returned (60%), 93% met the BCNS before surgery, 88% found the amount of information given was 'the right amount at the right time' although only 73% stated they received written information. 93% 'understood their illness & treatment they received'. 97% knew how to contact the BCNS but 39% would contact their GP. 87% were 'satisfied with the way feelings were addressed'. 100% were satisfied with their breast prosthesis.

Conclusions: The majority of patients valued the introduction of the BCNS in both the 'caring' & 'practical' aspect. However, we aim to evaluate methods to improve information provision in a variety of formats (eg., Video, support groups, filofax systems, Internet access) to achieve a 100% patient satisfaction rate.

1398

POSTER

Assessing patient satisfaction with radiation therapy information

R. Samant¹, J. French², M. Yu². ¹Department of Radiation Oncology; ²Department of Radiation Therapy; Fraser Valley Cancer Centre, Surrey, BC, Canada

Education in oncology is an essential part of overall patient management. However, difficulties can arise when explaining complicated treatment procedures, such as radiation therapy, to which most patients are generally

unaccustomed. Even detailed verbal explanations and written materials may not be adequate for the patients' needs. At the Fraser Valley Cancer Centre, we have taken a multidisciplinary approach to look at ways of improving patient understanding with regards to radiation therapy treatment. As part of this process, we have developed a patient questionnaire to determine the level of satisfaction with the information given presently and to identify areas for improvement. Breast cancer patients undergoing radiotherapy were the first group to be evaluated in this manner. The results of the survey and its possible implications for enhancing patient education will be discussed. We believe that this formal approach of getting patient feedback is an important aspect of continuing quality improvement and patient care in oncology.

1399

POSTER

Should audio-recordings be used in nurse/patient communication?

R. McDonald. *Beatson Oncology Centre, West Glasgow Hospitals, University NHS Trust, UK*

Purpose: This study presents a pilot project of information-giving to 20 cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment. It is recognised that informing cancer patients about the details of proposed treatments can be difficult due to the psychological effect the diagnosis has on the individual. Furthermore the literature demonstrates that patients undergoing chemotherapy have limited knowledge of the treatment and associated side-effects. Provision of informational support by the nurse has been shown to improve patients' knowledge and enhance self-care behaviours. Additionally, the use of tape recording medical consultations has demonstrated improved information retention and satisfaction with communication. Therefore, the purposes of this study were to explore the relationship between tape recorded nurse/patient communication and its effect on chemotherapy.

Methods: A quantitative experimental approach was used to test the hypothesis of a cause and effect relationship between the independent variable (information giving) and the dependant variable (chemotherapy knowledge).

Results: Utilising the ANOVA statistical test, the results indicate a non-statistically significant difference on chemotherapy knowledge between the control and experimental groups. ($P = 0.339$). Hence, the intervention of information recorded on tape was not found to increase patient's knowledge. Nonetheless, the chemotherapy knowledge mean value was higher in the experimental group (3.6, S.D. 1.75) than in the control group (2.2, S.D. 1.23).

Conclusion: Tape recording information was considered to have a beneficial effect in terms of information retention. However, it is proposed a larger study looking at satisfaction with communication in addition to chemotherapy knowledge is undertaken to determine if the results are significant.

1400

POSTER

Cancer patient education & information: Development of a new structured information package

N. DeZeeuw, V.R. Bulusu, R. Thomas, C. Owen, H. Baines, R. Allerton.
Patient Education & Information Group, Oncology Centre, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, CB2 2QQ, UK

The need for information is one of the most frequently cited self perceived needs identified by cancer patients and their families. The rationale for patient information/education is that the patient and families have a right to be informed and professional standards recommend adequate patient information provision as part of an integrated cancer care delivery.

Aim: We present the methodology and concepts in the development of structured information package kits for cancer patients in the form of a filofax and anatomical site specific visual aids. The filofax unit and the visual explanation aids will be demonstrated.

Methodology: The process of developing the new package involved the following steps.

1. Identification of the patients' needs.
2. Review of the previously existing information leaflets from diverse sources.
3. Careful scrutiny and rational restructuring of the information in a filofax format.
4. Development of the site specific visual aids in a laminated form to be used as additional explanation aids during consultation.

Results & Conclusions: It is feasible to develop a comprehensive structured information package for cancer patient use. The effect of this new package on patient satisfaction will be assessed in a future randomised study. This new package may have potential to serve as a resource for the relatives, carers and community based health care professionals involved.