

281

POSTER

Problems in treatment and nursing of cancer patients

R. Schoberberger, A. Schmeiser-Rieder, M. Kunze. *Institute of Social Medicine, University of Vienna, Austria*

Purpose: Treatment and nursing of cancer-patients make great demands for physicians, nurses and family of the patients. The extreme psychic stress for the patient and the difficult therapeutic situation lead to frustration among the health professionals and may be a cause of the frequent observed burnout-syndrom. The study which was designed to ameliorate this situation.

Methods: The project consisted of three parts: (a) qualitative analysis of the problem through discussion with experts in oncology, (b) quantitative analysis through questionnaire-investigation with physicians and nurses, (c) providing training courses for interested doctors and nurses. 412 doctors and 429 nurses from 135 oncologic hospital-departments all over Austria answered the questionnaire.

Results: The most important results are: 79% of the physicians and 84% of the nurses complain the ignorance about the potentiality of psychological support; 65% of the doctors and 74% of the nurses have the opinion, that therapeutic complaints are often caused by lack of information for the patient. Doctors who were asked about the most important progress in cancer therapy during the last few years indicate first of all prophylactic measures for nausea during chemo- or radiotherapy (70%).

Conclusion: 83% of the physicians and 93% of the nurses are of opinion that further education in "non-medical treatment of cancer patients" would be very helpful. Special one-day-seminars were so far attended by 83 doctors and 106 nurses. The valuation of the seminars had been very positive.

282

POSTER

Distress and need for psychosocial support in cancer patients during radiotherapy

A. DeVries¹, W. Söllner², E. Steixner¹, V. Auer², W. Iglseder¹, G. Schießling², A. Sztankay¹, P. Lukas¹. ¹Department of Radiotherapy & Radiooncology; ²Department of Medical Psychology & Psychotherapy; University of Innsbruck, Austria

Purpose: Cancer patients experience distress particularly during strongly invasive medical treatment. The aim of the study is to evaluate the degree of distress on one hand and patients' attitude towards supportive counselling on the other.

Methods: All patients with different types of cancer beginning a radiation treatment are included in this study. Besides social demographic and clinical parameters we assess psychosocial distress, the degree of social support and patients interest in supportive counselling either from the oncologist, a psychotherapist or a social worker.

Results: Preliminary data from the first two months of this ongoing study are presented. 101 patients were involved, 58 female and 43 male. 43 (42.6%) patients exhibited severe distress, exceeding the threshold values of the Hornheide- questionnaire and the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale. 73 patients (72%) expressed interest in emotional support from the oncologist, 32 (32%) patients wanted psychological counselling, and 18 (18%) patients wanted support from a social worker, additionally.

Conclusion: These preliminary data demonstrate the need for supportive counselling from the oncologist. Additional psychotherapeutical counselling should be offered to those patients experiencing severe distress.