

Teaching Lecture

E15. Supporting breast cancer patients in different cultures: Maggie's Centres

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Since 1996, Maggie's has been pioneering a new concept of cancer support in the UK. We provide help, information and practical support to people affected by cancer to enable them to manage the process of diagnosis as effectively as possible and to experience a good quality of life through and beyond treatment.

A diagnosis of cancer can have a devastating effect on people's lives. It can provoke a range of emotions, including severe distress and feelings of anxiety, depression, helplessness and uncertainty. For many, having a serious illness such as cancer can trigger an existential crisis. This can challenge people's perception of their sense of self, their existence in the world and their sense of purpose and meaning in life. This impact goes beyond the person with cancer to affect families, friends and carers too.

In addition to facing the emotional and psychological consequences of a cancer diagnosis, people often need help with accessing information appropriate to their circumstances. They may need advice regarding treatment

or managing side-effects, or they may seek details on nutrition, benefits or making changes that will improve their physical and mental well-being.

Over the last 15 years Maggie's Centres have developed a network of cancer support centres across Europe for anyone affected by cancer. Every visitor has access to our cancer professionals and to our core programme of support which encompasses practical information, psychological and emotional support, stress and distress management, and help in making choices to live differently.

We work with each individual to identify their needs and elicit their concerns and fears. Understanding each individual's circumstances is central to what we do and allows us to guide each person through aspects of the programme most appropriate to them.

Conflict of interest statement

None declared.