

Nursing Education in Psycho-Oncology

Mariko Kaneko

Professor, PhD, RN, CNS, Tokyo Health Care University, Tokyo, Japan.

m-kaneko@thcu.ac.jp

**Corresponding Author: Mariko Kaneko, Professor, PhD, RN, CNS, Tokyo Health Care University, Tokyo, Japan.*

Abstract

Objective: This study aimed to develop nursing educational programs regarding knowledge, assessment, intervention, and nurse's own stress management on psychological and ethical aspects in cancer care.

Subjects: A program was developed based on the Internet survey of 540 nurses [1], wherein 28 nurses have implemented and corrected the program and 20 nurses performed and confirmed the effect of the program [2].

Results: A 10-h program on psychological aspects, ethics, communication, and stress management of nurses was established.

Keywords: cancer nursing, nursing education program, nurse's own stress management, psycho-oncology

INTRODUCTION

According to the American Cancer Society, 25% of cancer survivors in the United States develop depression [3]. In the psycho-oncology field, it is imperative to establish early detection and intervention of mental disorders among patients with cancer, and a consistent support should also be provided.

There is an immense need for psycho-oncological interventions designed to improve mental health in adolescents and young adults with cancer [4]. However, educational programs for nurses on psychological assessment and intervention in the psycho-oncology domain are not standardized. The present preliminary study included 28 nurses who were interested to take

a 10-h program for 2 days and measured self-efficacy in terms of knowledge and correspondence 3 months before, immediately after, 3 months later. Statistically significant differences were observed immediately after the program, except for decision support, which continued even after 3 months. The outline of the survey has already been presented in a previous paper [1].

In the future, the nurse's knowledge and correspondence quality for psychological assessment and intervention not only for physical care but also for holistic care should be addressed. It is important to conduct educational programs that can provide educational materials.

Table 1. Nursing education in psycho-oncology Program achievement and contents

I. Mental state assessment and other occupational collaborations

- 1) Can assess the possibility of adaptation disorder in cancer patients and make a judgment that requires collaboration with experts
- 2) Can identify possible risk factors of depression in cancer patients and make a judgment that requires collaboration with experts
- 3) Can diagnose delirium in cancer patients and make a judgment that requires collaboration with experts
- 4) Can respond to cancer patients possessing suicidal thoughts, in collaboration with other experts (including case studies)

II. Psychological assessment and multi-occupational collaboration

- 1) Regarding the psychological intervention administered to patients with cancer and families who are in crisis due to notification of disease name, recurrence, and metastasis, a multi-occupation collaboration can be used, as necessary
- 2) Can assess and respond to anxiety in cancer patients
- 3) Can identify the cause of anger among patients with cancer and can respond when necessary, in collaboration with other experts
- 4) Can inform the child regarding their parents' existing disease such as cancer, with the collaboration of other experts, as necessary (including case studies)

III. Communication

- 1) Can relay empathy and allow formation of rapport with patients
- 2) Can understand and respond to patients' inquiries in terms of its extent and scope
- 3) Can assess and respond to family situation through effective communication (including role play)

IV. To support decision making

- 1) When an ethical conflict arises between the patient and his or her surroundings concerning treatment, sedation, how to want to have the end of life.

If there is an ethical conflict between a patient, a family member, and a medical care person, one can respond with the concept of ethical principles, including other occupational collaborations as the foundation (including case studies)

V. Nurse's own stress management

- 1) Can explain the nurse's stress in the oncology area
- 2) Can explain the concept of cognitive behavioral therapy
- 3) Regarding cognitive reconstruction method and problem-solving therapy, can explain stress management

Table 2. Contents of this program

1. Factors that make the psychological assessment of cancer patients difficult

2. Assessment and intervention to anxiety, depression, delirium, and anger

- 1) Distinction between medical problems and nursing problems:
 - Assessment of mental symptoms such as adaptation disorder, depression, and delirium.
 - Assessment of academia and psychology: understanding of crisis situation, nursing model, and anxiety.
 - Assessment of anger.

3. Medical communication

4. Decision making and ethics adjustment

5. Understanding and utilization of cognitive behavioral therapy: problem-solving was the method used by cancer patients as a cognitive behavioral therapy
6. Expand the range of mental care practice: knowledge and relaxation knowledge and techniques, relaxation exercises, and knowledge and technology of mindfulness

7. Stress management exercises using cognitive behavior therapy (cognitive reconstruction method, problem-solving techniques)

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