To Promote Effective Communication with Adult Patients Receiving Palliative Care For Advanced Cancer in the Inpatient Oncology Settings in Singapore: The Development of a Teaching Programme Using the Sage and Thyme Model for Registered Nurses

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BACKGROUND

The worldwide cancer incidence is projected to rise by 50% in year 2020.1 With increasing number of older people in Singapore, the incidence of cancer is expected to escalate proportionally since cancer is primarily a disease of ageing.2 Over the last few years, patients with advanced cancer are living longer in the palliative phase as a result of more effective palliative treatment.3 It is essential to ensure that patients’ information needs are met so as to improve their psychosocial adjustment and ability to manage their own condition.3 However, many registered nurses working in the inpatient oncology settings in Singapore find it difficult to elicit patients’ concerns and respond to them appropriately due to their lack of training and education in communication skills.2 Consequently, these patients are not given appropriate information to cope with their concerns, which in turn adversely affects their outcomes and quality of life.

AIMS

To explore the effectiveness of using the SAGE and THYME model for registered nurses to improve their ability to identify and address the information needs of patients undergoing palliative care for advanced cancer.

METHODS

Comprehensive search was conducted in March 2015 using PubMed, CINAHL and Ovid SP databases. The search terms used include 'information', 'advanced cancer', 'palliative', 'training', 'education', 'SAGE and THYME', 'nurse', 'patient', 'communication', 'needs', 'concerns' and 'skills'. Search was limited to articles written in English with abstracts and published from 2005 to 2015. Further search was conducted using end-text references of all eligible articles to search for additional research studies.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Inclusion Criteria
a) Examined the information needs of adult patients (>18 years) with advanced cancer
b) Assessed the effectiveness of communication skills training and education programme for registered nurses who were caring for advanced cancer patients in the palliative phase
c) Implemented the SAGE and THYME training programme.

Exclusion Criteria
a) Secondary sources which include integrative reviews, expert commentaries and end-text references of all studies.

SEARCH RESULTS

Initial search (n=181) Abstract review (n=112) Full-text review (n=55)
Studies selected (n=8)
3 were quantitative, 3 were qualitative and 2 were mixed methods studies.

STUDY QUALITY

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Internal validity
External validity
Reliability
Credibility
Translatability
Dependability
Conformability

The SAGE and THYME model serves as a guide to explore and address the information needs of patients living with advanced cancer in the palliative phase through fostering an effective communication process with the aim of building a positive nurse-patient relationship.

REFERENCES