

Abstract

Original Article

Skills of Oncology Nurses in Diagnosing the Psychosocial Needs of the Patients

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Abstract

Aim: This study was performed to evaluate the skills of the nurses in diagnosing the psychosocial requirements of oncology patients.

Introduction: Cancer is included in a group of diseases with the highest potential of psychological difficulties and problems. Nurses, when performing an extensive health diagnosis, should plan nursing interventions focused on the physical, spiritual, psychosocial, and mental requirements of the patient

Method: This study is a descriptive-cross sectional study. Data were collected using a survey form. Section I consists of 15 questions about the demographics and professional specifications of the nurses and 13 questions to evaluate the psychosocial requirements of the patients. In Section II, patient admittance and continuous diagnostics in 12 dimensions based on Gordon's functional health patterns were analyzed using a visual analog scale (VAS).

Results: Mean age of the nurses included in the study was 29.3 ± 6.2 years with a mean working period in oncology unit of 4.6 ± 5.6 years. When the factors affecting the psychosocial evaluation were assessed, the most common factor was "not able to spend time for psychosocial requirements of the patient because of work load" with a percentage of 80.3% (n: 126), followed by "do not have knowledge to perform psychosocial evaluation" with a rate of 22.9%.

Conclusion: Factors such as work load and inadequate knowledge might be suggested to prevent nurses from psychosocially evaluating their patients. Nurses who had received training in this field perform better in the psychosocial evaluation.

Implication for nursing practice and health policy: Patients of oncology are also at a substantial risk of developing psychiatric disorders, and thus they should be comprehensively evaluated in terms of biopsychosocial dimensions.

Key words: nurses, diagnosis, psychosocial needs, oncology patients.