Assessment of Nurses Knowledge toward Supporting Families of Children with Cancer at Oncology Wards in Baghdad Teaching Pediatric Hospitals

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Abstract: *Nurses´ knowledge toward Supporting Families of Children with Cancer at oncology wards in Baghdad pediatrics teaching hospitals. A cross-sectional study was carried out among 25 nurses selected by using non probability sampling (purposive sampling). According to study findings females were 72% of the study sample, 36% of them between (30-34) years of age and 40% had graduate institute of nursing. Regarding to the items of supporting, nurses had a moderate level of knowledge the grand mean was 1.55. Training session to educate nurses about stress management and psycho-social, emotional and religion support, and communication skills.*

Keywords: Supporting, Nurses´ knowledge, Families, Cancer and Oncology wards

1. Introduction

Cancer is when abnormal cells divide in an uncontrolled way. Some cancers may eventually spread into other tissues. [1] In 2014, the American Cancer Society estimates that almost 16,000 children (age birth to 19 years) will be diagnosed with cancer in the United States. [2]

Due to remarkable advances in childhood cancer treatment, the five-year survival rate for all cancer sites (including leukemia, cancer of the brain and other nervous system, renal tumors, and other cancers) has increased to 79%. this improvement in the survival rate causes long-term repercussions on the lives of children and family. [3]

Difficulties for the patient's parents include fear of relapse, anxiety, the need to assimilate information received, care provided to healthy children, attempts to adapt to the new health condition, provide care in the event of side effects, and care provided for intercurrences, among other situations, which harm the family's quality of life. [4] The family react and adapt to their child's diagnosis of cancer and its subsequent effects on family life has been well documented within theories of stress and coping. [5]

The ability for parents of children with cancer to deal with these stressors may depend largely on the supportive care available to them. [6] Supportive care has been defined as a benefit to patients and their families by encouraging individuals to live as well as possible. [7]

Oncology nurses are closely involved with numerous supportive care issues encountered by cancer patients and their families. [8] Parents of children with cancer need for supportive care, also they need for Informational (to reduce confusion, anxiety, and fear; better inform the patient's or family's decision making; and assist in skill acquisition), emotional (sense of comfort, belonging, and reassurance in times of stress and understanding), practical (direct assistance to accomplish a task or activity and thereby reduce demands on the person), and physical (comfort, freedom from pain, optimum nutrition, and ability to carry out activities of daily living), psychosocial (related to one's sense of self-worth, competence, and being valued; needs related to family relationships and community acceptance) and spiritual needs (related to the meaning that life holds a sense of purpose and a relationship with a higher being). [9]

2. Methodology of the study

Subjects: The study population included the nurses working in the oncology wards at different level of education, aged 20 to over 40 years. The study sample is 25 nurses selected by non probability sampling method (purposive sampling).

Questionnaire:
The sociodemographic data sheet, consisted of (3) items categorized as general information (gender, age, and level of education).

Supporting items questionnaire was constructed to assess the nurses knowledge. It was composed of (6) items which were score and rated on two level Likert scale (2) for true answer and (1) for false answer and their assessment by cutoff point (0.33) due to scores (1 and 2) respectively. Scores of response are categorized according to the following: (1-1.33) = Low ;(1.34-1.67) = Moderate; (1.68-2.00) = High

There are 2 items from the total items are reverse, this items are (1 and 2)

Determination of reliability of the questionnaire is based on the Cronbach´s Alpha reliability (reliability coefficient (0.83), the instrument valid through panel of experts.

A statistical analysis was performed using the Microsoft office excel 2007 and SPSS package (version 16).

3. Results

Table 1: Distribution of the Study Sample by their General Information

Variables		Number	percentage
Gender	Male	7	28
	Female	18	72
	Total	25	100
Ages (years)	20-24 years	2	8
	25-29 years	1	4
	30-34 years	9	36
	35-39 years	6	24
	40 years and more	7	28
	Total	25	100
Level of education	graduate Junior high nursing	6	24
	Graduate Institute of Nursing	10	40
	Graduate of the College of Nursing	7	28
	Graduate of master degree in nursing	2	8
	Total	25	100

No.= number, %= percentage

Table (1) indicated that 72% of nurses´ gender were females, the age group (30-34) and 40 and more years were 36% and 28% respectively and 40% of nurses had graduate from institute of nursing.

Table 2: Distribution of Nurses Responses to Items of Supporting Families of Child with Cancer

No.	Questions	True answer		False answer		M. S	Ass.
		f	%	f	%		
1	Excessive talk and dismissiveness with the patient or his relatives	9	36	16	64	1.36	M
2	Avoid physical contact (placing the hand on the patient's shoulder or hand)	6	24	19	76	1.24	L
3	Help the child's family to understand health information about the child's condition	16	64	9	36	1.64	M
4	Help the child's family to change negative thoughts or views that cause prolongation of stress and anxiety	18	72	7	28	1.72	H
5	Teaching the patient and his family how to cope with stress and stress	18	72	7	28	1.72	H
6	Religious and spiritual support (e.g. encouraging the patient or his family to pray)	15	60	13	40	1.6	M
	Total mean	1.55		Assessment		M	

f= frequency, %= percentage, M. S= mean of score, Ass.= assessment, level of assessment: (1-1.33) = low = L, (1.34-1.67) = moderate = M, (1.68-2.00) = high = H

The findings of the study in table (2) indicated that nurses´ responding level to the items by using mean of score, nurses had a moderate level of knowledge toward supporting families during bad events and the grand mean of the instrument items is (1.55).

4. Conclusions

Females were 72% of the study sample, 36% of them between (30-34) years of age and 40% had graduate institute of nursing. nurses had a moderate level of knowledge toward supporting families during bad events. Training session for educate nurses how to support children with cancer and their family, it is important to manage the stress and anxiety and other psychological problems of families during breaking bad news and encourage nurses to make a good relationships with patients and their families and psycho-social, emotional and religion support.

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