2016

Cancer Communication within Families

Marta Salazar and Sabrina L. Dickey
Purpose and Objectives
To analyze and comprehend the conversations that college-age students are having about the topic of cancer.

Abstract
In family cancer communication, studies have been conducted among patients, family members, and their healthcare providers to address their comfort level in communicating about cancer. A review of the literature on family cancer communication revealed a gap regarding information from a college audience. Approximately 1.6 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed in 2016 in the United States. Cancer extends among various races, socioeconomic classes, and families. Despite the prevalence of cancer among many populations, there still exists a negative stigma about the illness. The current study seeks to pilot a questionnaire to explore family cancer communication and knowledge of breast, lung and prostate cancer among college students. By piloting the questionnaire, a tool can be developed to specifically address family cancer communication patterns among college students. The development of this tool can lead to novel interventions for communicating and assisting families, which have members that are diagnosed or survivors of cancer. In addition to improving cancer communication among families, the development of this tool can assist with innovative interventions for improving the quality of life for all those involved.

Methods
After conducting a review of the literature about different techniques to evaluate communication between partners, questions were drawn from these questionnaires, as well as created from our own observations and experiences, in order to gather an overall indication of the knowledge and patterns that college students possess in relation to cancer. With analysis of variance test and Cronbach’s alpha, the researchers will be able to determine if this pilot questionnaire is a valid one in order to observe communication patterns, as well as improving relationships between patients, their families, and caregivers.

Target Demographics: College students ages 18-24

Timeline of Methods
1. Ask Research question
2. Read peer reviewed literature
3. Create questionnaire
4. Implement survey
5. Gather Data
6. Analyze the data

Gather Data
• Use the statistical tools to test the validity of the survey

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