

Psychological Adaptation and Growth in Exploring Parental Experiences in Paediatric Cancer Care

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Introduction

Pediatric cancer is a challenging and emotionally taxing journey for both the child and their parents. As they navigate through the complex landscape of cancer care, parents experience a wide array of emotions and undergo a process of psychological adaptation and growth. This article delves into the profound experiences of parents whose children are undergoing cancer treatment, with a focus on understanding their psychological responses and the growth that emerges from this arduous journey.

In-depth interviews were conducted with parents, utilizing open-ended questions to explore their thoughts, feelings, and experiences during their child's chemotherapy and cancer care. From these interviews, two recurring themes emerged, shedding light on the parental journey - the learning to grow process and psychological adaptation and modification. The parents' narratives reflect a dynamic process of learning, coping, and personal growth as they face the challenging reality of their child's illness. Moreover, this article uncovers the specific needs of parents caring for children with cancer, emphasizing their requirements for emotional support, effective communication, and accurate information about symptom management and treatment. By understanding these needs, medical staff and nurses can work collaboratively with parents to develop supportive interventions and resources, including a Symptom Management Mini Program, designed to address their unique challenges and promote psychological well-being during this difficult period [1].

This exploration of parental experiences in pediatric cancer care contributes valuable insights to the field, enabling healthcare professionals to better understand and support parents as they navigate the intricate emotional and psychological terrain of caring for a child with cancer. Ultimately, by recognizing and addressing the needs of parents, we can create a more compassionate and holistic approach to pediatric cancer care that fosters resilience, adaptation, and growth within the entire family unit.

Description

Children around the world are at risk from cancer for their lives and health. According to the most recent report on childhood cancer, more than 380,000 children and adolescents between the ages of 0 and 19 were diagnosed with cancer each year. The incidence of cancer was 140.6 per million for children between the ages of 0 and 14 and 155.8 per million for children between the ages of 0 and 19 respectively. The morbidity rate for pediatric cancer in China was 10.78 per 100,000 people in 2012, down from 11.35 per 100,000 people in 2009. Children's health and quality of life are greatly impacted by cancer

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treatment and the disease itself. Fatigue, pain, nausea, vomiting, emotional distress, altered quality of sleep, and poor social and physical function are typical signs and symptoms. As the primary caregivers for children with cancer, parents are crucial in the management of these symptoms related to cancer or treatment.

Emotional and informational needs were the two most frequently mentioned categories of needs that parents of children with cancer tend to encounter. Health intervention is a new way to spread knowledge and make communication easier to meet each person's needs. It can make the experience of disease and clinical outcomes much better, reduce complications and anxiety, and make treatment more likely to be followed. There are few studies that aim to support the parents of children with cancer in symptom management through mHealth interventions and to determine whether the parents have the particular needs for caring for children's adverse symptoms. As a result, we are thinking about examining and meeting the symptom management requirements of parents of children with cancer as well as assisting medical professionals in providing better care for children with cancer [2].

The feasibility of pediatric patient-reported outcomes apps and smartphone-based health management has been confirmed by our previous studies. We chose WeChat Mini Programs for healthcare because of their small file sizes, low performance requirements for smartphone hardware, user-friendliness, and widespread acceptance. In addition, our completed study on the experience and needs of parents of children with cancer served as the basis for this study. It revealed that parents played important roles in the management of their children's symptoms and had significant informational, communication, and psychological needs. As a result, the goal of this study was to create a WeChat Mini Program based on previous research to meet the needs of cancer parents and encourage them to participate in symptom management, facilitating family-centered care [3].

The University of California, San Francisco Symptom Management Theory, which depicts symptom management as a multidimensional process occurring in the domains of nursing science, served as the basis for the development of the structure of the symptom management mHealth intervention. This theory looked at three interconnected aspects of managing symptoms: outcomes, symptom experience, and strategies for managing symptoms the model's basic idea was that taking into account all three factors was necessary for effective symptom management [4].

This study examined the experiences of parents and children who evolved through the process of symptom management on the basis of this theory. Multiple meetings of the multidisciplinary research team were held to confirm the structure and main components of parents participating in the symptom report and management based on their experiences. The parents' caring knowledge and abilities were enhanced, and their anxiety and uncertainty were reduced, as a direct result. This program ultimately resulted in a reduction in children with cancer's symptoms. The phenomenological qualitative method was used to conduct semi-structured interviews with 14 parents of children with cancer who were at the stage of chemotherapy in two hospitals in order to fully comprehend and investigate the experience and requirements of symptom management for these parents [5].

Conclusion

In the interviews, open-ended questions such as "What were your

experiences and feelings during the time your child was cared for in chemotherapy?" were used. Two recurring themes from parents' experiences with symptoms and negative effects of caring was identified: the learning to grow process, as well as psychological adaptation and modification. There are three main themes that can be used to sum up parents' needs for care: Requirements for emotional support, communication, and information when it comes to taking care of the symptoms and treatments of their children who have cancer, parents continue to learn and develop and have numerous requirements. To meet parents' needs for symptom knowledge, communication, and emotional support, which were the primary issues addressed during the symptom management Mini Program construction process, medical staff and nurses should collaborate closely with patients and parents.

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Conflict of Interest

Not applicable.

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