

Perceived social support and treatment outcome in Indian cancer patients

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Background: Indian family and socio-cultural structure are unique to provide support to the ailing members of the family. As the united or joint families still persist, the caregivers are more in numbers and can usually take turns. On the contrary, the community or welfare services are mostly scanty and unorganized in India.

The aim of the present study is to understand how the cancer patients in India identify and acknowledge the family support as well as community support system.

Materials & Methods: Total 240 patients (Age 18-60) in the age group of eight to eleven having cancer diagnosed within the last 3 years had been studied. The test batteries used were Duke Health Profile, Locus of Control, Socio-economic Status Scale, Perceived Support Inventory, Bells Adjustment Inventory and Parental Sensitization Index.

Results: Subjects who scored better significantly in social health and self-esteem areas in Duke Health Profile reflected more satisfactory treatment outcome. Better parental sensitization indicated better mental health but social welfare was not perceived as an important factor for treatment availability. Better home and social adjustments were reflected in treatment outcome. Locus of control was not related to treatment outcome in general.

Conclusion: Studies indicate that both family and community and welfare support are very much needed for oncology patients in western countries. On the contrary, present study indicates that in a developing country like India, though family support is highly anticipated by cancer patients, social welfare is not regarded as indispensable mainly due to either unavailability or inaccessibility.

Reference:

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