Developing and validating a problem-solving tool for caregivers to manage antineoplastic treatment for family members

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To develop and validate an educational tool consisting of a deck of cards for caregivers to educate them to autonomously and safely manage biological antineoplastic oral therapy for their family members at home. This will also increase patient adherence to treatment.
The learner will be able to design and implement a process for the validation of therapeutic education tool for caregivers of cancer patients.

This study provides and practical example of how a new tool can be successfully developed by experts and then validated thanks to the active involvement of its end-users, who in this case are the caregivers themselves.

This process can also improve patients’ adherence to treatment and its outcomes both for patients and their family caregivers.
Learning objective/2

The learner will be able to use a qualitative research method for the development and validation of a new tool for caregivers.

The caregivers were actively involved by using a short interview asking if they were satisfied with what was written on each card and if the pictures and illustrations on each were appropriate.

Not just words, but also pictures have a significant psychological impact on caregivers who often suffer from physical and emotional burnout.
Self Management

• “Self-management aims at helping patients to maintain a wellness in their foreground perspective” Corbin & Strauss (1988).

• It is based on the perception patients have about problems linked to their conditions. This led us to choose a method based on the theory of problem-based learning, such as the Barrows Cards (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1977), and applied it to patients with the purpose of improving self-management through therapeutic education.
Methods

• The Barrows Cards were originally used to test decision-making skills and critical thinking in medical students.

• This method uses a situational card that describes a complex problem and learners can choose from a deck of at least 15 cards each of which describes a possible solution to that problem with the support of a picture.
Methods

12 oncologists and cancer nurses

At our Teaching Hospital in Genoa

Two focus groups to define the themes to include in the cards.

Nursing diaries of the last 6 months of nurses directly caring for cancer patients

The 15 cards were then tested on 18 caregivers to verify if the contents (terminology and pictures) on the cards were clear and appropriate.
Methods

Review of the literature

Obtaining support and advice from 12 cancer experts

Checking the nursing records diaries of the last six months

Feedback from patients on the clarity on each card and appropriateness of the picture.
The person you care for has just started a new biological antineoplastic oral therapy.

The nurse explained to both of you how to handle the therapy and how to properly deal with the adverse effects that could occur during the treatment.
It’s therapy time, but a phone call distracts your care recipient. After the conversation, he/she doesn’t remember having taken the tablets.

In doubt, you advise to take them again.

Double uptake is overdosing, and it can create problems of toxicity. It is recommended to note the dose taken immediately on a diary to avoid doubts.
Bad nutrition, physical deterioration and weakness are problems should not be underestimated. It is necessary to monitor weight and ensure correct daily food intake. Eating light meals and frequently, preferably salty foods that the person likes, to avoid nausea and heartburn.

You decide to contact the cancer center.
Results

- All of the 18 caregivers were satisfied.
- On the cards, caregivers preferred to include photographs rather than drawn illustrations.
- This qualitative process enabled to validate the cards for caregivers.
Conclusion

• The lack of adherence to therapy not only reduces the effectiveness of therapeutic treatment but also the incorrect management of the therapy can lead to adverse events.

• At home caregivers play an important role in ensuring that the people they care for correctly adhere to the treatment prescribed, and yet the importance of their role is neglected.
Conclusion

• It is important for nurses to provide caregivers with structured education interventions to help them manage treatment and monitor adverse effects in a more confident manner.

• This will improve adherence to treatment and outcomes both for patients and their caregivers, who will feel more confident and less burdened by the fear of making mistakes. However, more work is needed to confirm this.


Thank you for your attention

For more information

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