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Title: Comparing Patients' and Nurses' Perception of Caring Behaviours in an Oncology Unit

Abstract

To provide high quality of nursing care service, nurses must know what kinds of caring behavior are perceived as important by their patients. If nurses' perceptions on this aspect are different with their patients, they may provide caring service that is not match with the actual caring needs of their patient, and thus patients' need will not be fulfilled.

This exploratory study aimed at identifying any discrepancy between nurses' and cancer patients' perception on various important caring behaviors and associations between peoples' caring perception and their socio-demographic backgrounds. It was carried out in an oncology setting of a large acute hospital in Hong Kong. A Chinese version of Caring Assessment Instrument (CARE-Q) was used for pursuing the purpose. A convenience sampling of fifty nursing staff and fifty cancer patients were recruited.

The results found that people in Hong Kong valued profession knowledge and skills of nurse more than the affective aspects. It also demonstrated a great discrepancy between Hong Kong nurses' and patients' perception on important caring behaviors. It was mainly focused on the CARE-Q subscale ' Anticipates', which indicated that patients' value was much higher than nurses'. This may result form the influence of Chinese culture, the task-orientated nursing practices and the busy hospital working environment. Furthermore, the study found that the differences in patients' and nurses' perceptions of important caring behaviors were not significantly related to nurses' rank, experience and educational level. In addition, patients, demographic and clinical background also did not have any significant effect on their perceptions on this aspect. Therefore, as a conclusion, nurses could not predict cancer patients' needs accurately according to their professional knowledge or patients demographic backgrounds. Communication with patients is an effective method to understand what is really need by patients.

This study could enhance local nurses' understanding to their clients' caring needs; arouse nurses' concerns on perceptual discrepancies of caring behaviors between them and cancer patients; and then develop effective methods to eliminate the captioned discrepancies in the future, so as to improve the quality of caring service in Hong Kong.