Rehabilitative care in a specialist palliative day care unit: A study of patients’ perspectives

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Introduction

Phenomenology was chosen to explore the rehabilitative care approach.

Phenomenology literally means ‘the study of phenomena’ and phenomenological research begins with the acknowledgment that there is a gap in our understanding (Wilson, 2000).

This research attempts to uncover the essential structure of the phenomenon by exploring the ‘outward appearance’ and ‘inward consciousness’ rooted in the person’s memory, image and meaning (Crombie, 1998). It aims to answer two related questions.

1. What is the phenomenon that is experienced?
2. How does it show itself?

Aim

To explore patients’ perceptions of the rehabilitative care approach at a specialist palliative day care unit

To consider how the rehabilitative care approach may be improved

Questions

1. What are people with cancers’ perceptions of their symptoms?
2. How do people with cancer perceive the rehabilitation they received?
3. What attitudes or beliefs do people with cancer have about the rehabilitation they have received?

Research findings

Normalisation process

“After a while you realise you can do other things”

Phenomenology initiates individuals rehabilitation through environmental factors and divertional therapy

People felt able to achieve more in their lives

Foundation of rehabilitation programme

Key factor in judging services quality

“It’s not so much the painting; it’s learning to do something different and think well yeah I can do anything”

Outcomes measures

Quality of life should represent the primary outcome measure

Based on people with cancers’ perspective not healthcare professionals’ perspective

Functional ability

Improved with rehabilitative care through complex interlinking of therapies and environmental factors

Helped reduce fatigue

Palliative Rehabilitative Care

Ownership

Health care professionals and people with cancer were seen as equal and active partners

Careful documentation achieved enabling appropriate referral to other health care professionals

Improvement in collaboration and multidisciplinary working

Enhancement of care pathway for people with cancer ensuring collaboration across service boundaries

References


Fulton, C. L. (1994) Physiotherapists in cancer care – a frame work for rehabilitation of patients. Physiotherapy, 80, 12, 830-834

