

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

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Introduction

In the western world cancer is the second principal cause of death (Fulton, 1994)

Annually 200,000 people are diagnosed with cancer and 120,000 people will die from the disease (DOH, 2000)

In England more than one in three people will develop cancer at some point in their lives, with one in four dying from the cancer itself (DOH, 2000)

With improved treatments cancer patients are living longer (Hopkins & Tookman, 2000)

The need for rehabilitation within palliative care is increasing (David, 1995).

The Government is driving forward the NHS Cancer Plan to improve service provision, where rehabilitation will be a key component in the strategy (NCHSPCS, 2000)

Aim

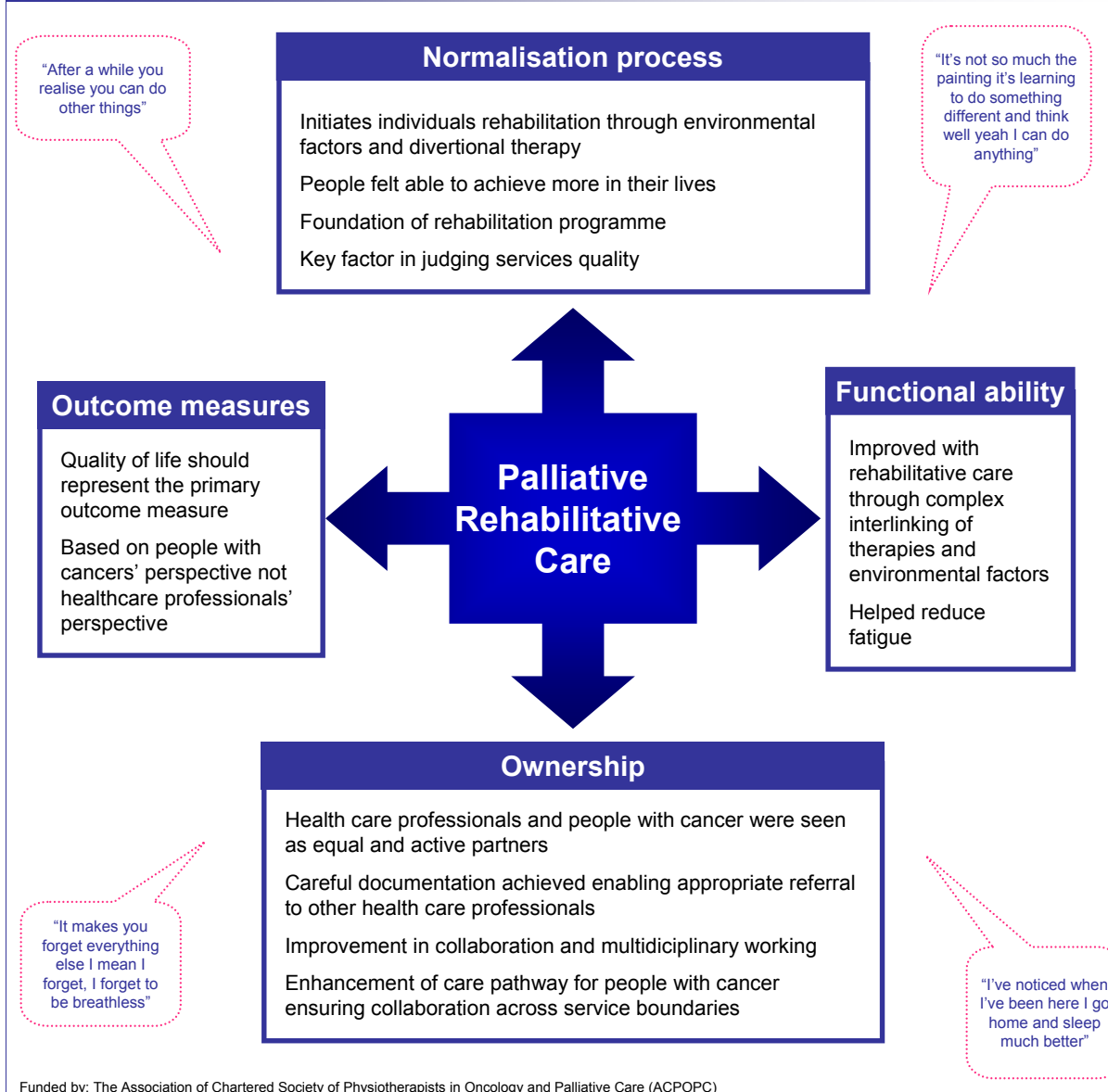
To explore patients' perceptions of the rehabilitative care approach at a specialist palliative day care unit

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



Method

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:

- What is the phenomenon that is experienced?
- How does it show itself?

Conclusion

This essential meaning should provide the researcher with the means to increase healthcare professionals' awareness and insight into the rehabilitative care approach.

References

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