

BENEFITS OF REHABILITATION FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

Minna Salakari, RN, Master of Health Care, Raija Nurminen, Principal Lecturer, RN, PhD, Tuija Leinonen, Principal Lecturer, RN, PhD, Turku University of Applied Sciences and Kari Ojala, Director, Southwestern Finland Cancer Society

PURPOSE

The purpose of the study was to produce knowledge about how rehabilitation benefits cancer patients and their significant others. The knowledge is employed in assessing the effectiveness of rehabilitation and in developing rehabilitation activities.

METHODS

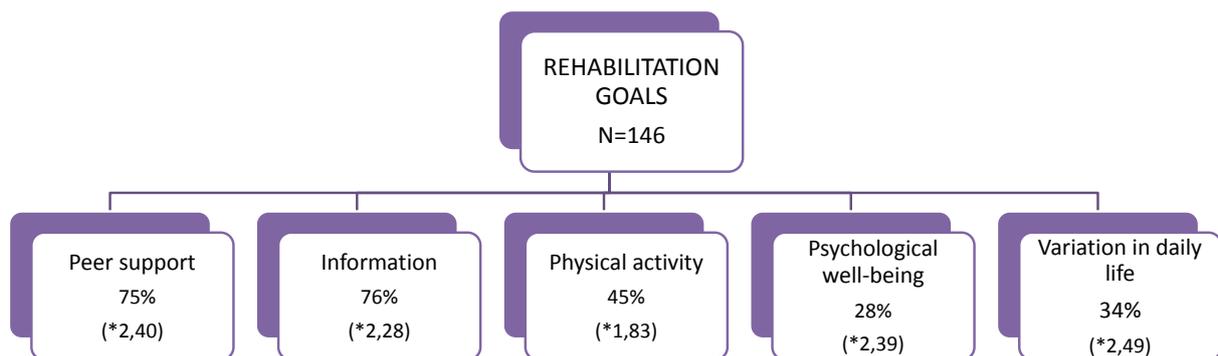
The qualitative data were collected with theme interviews, n = 120. The quantitative data were collected using the instruments FACT-G (N = 380), GAS (N = 146), RAND-36 (N = 186) and RBDI (N = 190).

RESULTS

All rehabilitees and their significant others benefited from rehabilitation. The most important benefits were peer and psychosocial support and receiving information.

The rehabilitation had a positive effect on all areas of well-being:

- Physical well-being areas: More than half of the respondents experienced a positive change during rehabilitation. Asthenia, malaise, and the ability to take care of the everyday life of the family are part of the physical well-being, and they improved in all areas (p=0.003).
 - Emotional area: Feelings of sadness turned into a positive as well as living with the disease and the experience of battle against the disease (p=0.001).
 - After rehabilitation, 71% of respondents were satisfied with the current quality of life (p=0.000).
 - The main changes are in the physical well-being sub-region. There was little variation between the sexes.
- 75% of the respondents (N = 146) set peer support as a goal, and more than 75% information. The importance of information was emphasised in the process of coping with and adapting to the disease. Information gave them more hope. Most of the goals have been achieved.
(* Scale 0–3: 0 = not achieved, 3 = achieved very well)



CONCLUSIONS

Rehabilitation supports the coping process and the basics of health promotion and helps the participants to adapt. Information was experienced as a source of hope, which has a significant impact on the entire coping process. The rehabilitation process requires a multidimensional programme that ensures strategies and tools for coping and improving participants' quality of life.



TURUN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
TURKU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES



LOUNAISSUOMEN
SYÖPÄYHDISTYS

Southwestern Finland Cancer Society

Project:

The effectiveness of rehabilitation with cancer patients and their significant others