

Can communication training for health care providers at a cancer ward improve the communication climate at the ward and the satisfaction of the cancer patients?

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Objective: In an experimental study we were aiming to show the effects of communication training for health care providers at a cancer ward in order to improve the quality and quantity of the patient education, and satisfaction with the care by the cancer patients.

Methods: A three years in-service communication training was held at a cancer ward of a general hospital. Pre- and post data were collected in an experimental study about (1) the quality and quantity of the communication of nurses, physicians and other HCPs towards patients and colleagues (n=22) as well as the satisfaction of the cancer patients with the quality of the care (n= 90).

Results: The communication training raised significantly the quality and quantity of the communication towards patients and with colleagues. Also the satisfaction of the patients about the quality of care did increase. However, the long-term implementation of these benefits was not-successful.

Conclusion: In-service communication training is an important mean to raise on the long term the quality of patient education at cancer departments in hospitals. Lasting implementation of the benefits requires although attention to organizational obstacles, budgetary conditions, leadership factors at the ward, and the application of an organizational oriented theoretical frame work.

Practice implications: Improvement of patient education at cancer wards does not only require educational means, organizational facilities and professional training, but may be improved too by in-service communication training This may increases the quality of the patient centered care and oncology wards, but attention is needed to a theoretical implementation framework to guide a lasting effects.

Biography:

Adriaan Visser (1941), PhD, social psychologist, thesis (1984) on the methodology of the measurement of patient satisfaction. He worked the rest of his life as health psychologist, engaged in education of students at Dutch universities and colleges on psychology, nursing, research in health care, implementation of health care changes, writing, and editor of several journals. Grants and publications about health promotion, patient education, patient satisfaction, organization of health care, methodology, dental care, diabetes, suicide, contraception, aging, chronically diseases, cancer, palliative care, PNI, depression, mindfulness, creative art, and spirituality. He is the Director of PRO-Health.org, a company for Publications, Research, and Organizational development in Healthcare Organizations.