Advanced Practice Nursing in Gynaecological Oncology – Development of an evidence-based concept

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Background

Women with gynaecological cancer often find themselves in complex situations and report high informational and supportive care needs [1,2]. Treatment can take from months to years involving a large number of healthcare professionals [3]. Therefore, providing continuity of care is rather challenging. One option in supporting women during their disease trajectory is the role of the Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) [4]. In recent years, the potential of an APN has been recognized in German-speaking countries as well. However, the development of APN is just in its beginning stage [5]. Local concepts and role descriptions, which provide key elements of an APN are missing also in the field of gynaecological cancer.

Aim

The aim of this study was to develop relevant contents of an evidence-based APN concept in gynaecological oncology for Austria and Switzerland.

Methods

Step 1: Knowledge generation

Knowledge for the concept was generated by conducting four single studies [6-9]. As a structural framework, the element "evidence" of the PARIHS-framework [10] was used.

Step 2: Synthesis of knowledge

The generated knowledge was synthesized to the concept by means of a matrix, which was developed based on the PEPPA plus Framework [11] supplemented with elements of the Nursing Role Effectiveness Model [12].

Results

- Divided into structure (figure 1), process (figure 2) and outcome criteria (figure 3), the concept describes main contents of an APN in gynaecological oncology in Austria and Switzerland.
- Further, relationships between structure-process, structure-outcome and process-outcome are described within the concept, which will be relevant for role evaluation.

Figure 1: Structure criteria

Figure 3: Outcome criteria

Figure 2: Process criteria

Conclusions

- For institutions, the developed concept can provide a basis for further developing APN role descriptions in gynaecological oncology.
- Specifics in gynaecological oncology can be found in the role's focus on psychosocial support and its main task of counselling along the illness trajectory.
- For further studies, it can be recommended to consider APN Frameworks [e.g. 11] and assess different perspectives in APN role development, implementation and evaluation.

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