

The supportive care needs for prostate cancer patients in Sarawak

Whye Lian Cheah¹, Ngok Chuo Ling², Kam Hock Chang³

¹Department of Community Medicine & Public Health, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Sarawak, Malaysia;

²Department of Urology, Sarawak General Hospital, Sarawak, Malaysia; ³Medical Education Unit, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Sarawak, Malaysia

Contributions: (I) Conception and design: WL Cheah, NC Ling; (II) Administrative support: None; (III) Provision of study materials or patients: None; (IV) Collection and assembly of data: NC Ling; (V) Data analysis and interpretation: WL Cheah, NC Ling; (VI) Manuscript writing: All authors; (VII) Final approval of manuscript: All authors.

Correspondence to: Dr. Whye Lian Cheah, Associate Professor, Department of Community Medicine & Public Health, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, 94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia. Email: wlcheah@unimas.my.

Background: This cross-sectional study aimed to determine the prevalence of unmet supportive care needs among prostate cancer patients.

Methods: The cross-sectional study was conducted among all prostate cancer patients at the Sarawak General Hospital. Interview was done using the Supportive Care Needs Survey-Short Form (SCNS-SF) and the Health Service Utilization Questionnaires (HSUQ). Data were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.

Results: A total of ninety-five patients participated, with majority were aged 65 and above and of primary educational level. The two most frequently reported unmet supportive care needs were “informed about cancer which is under control or diminishing” and “informed about things you can do to help yourself to get well” under the domain Health System and Information. Respondents who were older (65 years and above) had significant lower unmet needs in psychology ($P<0.01$), and sexuality compared to the younger group below 65 years ($P<0.01$). Except for physical and daily living, respondents with primary school level had significant lower unmet needs in all domains compared to secondary school level. Respondents with known stages of cancer had higher unmet needs in all domains compared to those who did not know.

Conclusions: Healthcare providers should provide more responsive, emotionally sensitive and client-centered care to patients with prostate cancer, particularly in the area of Health System and Information, and psychological support.

Keywords: Prostate cancer; unmet needs; supportive care needs

Submitted Apr 30, 2015. Accepted for publication Nov 30, 2015.

doi: 10.3978/j.issn.2304-3865.2016.02.01

View this article at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3978/j.issn.2304-3865.2016.02.01>

Introduction

Prostate cancer is one of the most important cancers in men with a worldwide incidence of 25.3 per 100,000 and is the second most common cancer in men (1). The American Cancer Society (2) estimated about one in every six men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during his lifetime. According to the society's statistics, 238,590 new cases of prostate cancer are being diagnosed in 2013 and about 29,720 men will die of prostate cancer. In Malaysia,

The Asian Pacific Prostate Society (3) reported that there were estimated 821 cases with 508 mortality cases which accounts as the second most common form of cancer among Malaysian Indian men. It is the fourth most common cause of cancer among the Chinese and Malay men.

Cancer often causes symptoms, and the treatments for cancer usually cause side effects. The diagnosis of cancer is associated with much psychological and emotional reaction like shock, anger, anxiety, confusion and depression (4). Cancer patients also have significant needs related to