

Evaluating a Structured Palliative Care Training Programme for Nurses: A Comparative Study on Pain Management and Quality of Life for Cancer Patients in Lagos, Nigeria

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| Abstract

Cancer patients in sub-Saharan Africa frequently experience substantial pain and reduced quality of life, exacerbated by limited access to specialist palliative care. Nurses are primary care providers, but often have insufficient formal training in this area. This study evaluated the effect of a structured palliative care training programme for nurses on pain management and quality of life for cancer patients at a teaching hospital in Lagos, Nigeria. A comparative study was conducted. Nurses from two similar oncology wards received the training intervention, whilst nurses from two other wards served as a comparison group. Cancer patients' pain scores, using a validated numerical rating scale, and quality of life, using a standardised questionnaire, were assessed before and after the intervention period. Data were analysed using appropriate statistical tests. Patients cared for by trained nurses reported a significantly greater reduction in average pain scores (a decrease of 2.8 points versus 0.9 points in the comparison group). They also showed greater improvement in quality of life domains, particularly in psychological well-being and physical symptoms. A structured palliative care training programme for nurses can lead to clinically meaningful improvements in pain management and quality of life for cancer patients in a Nigerian hospital setting. Structured palliative care modules should be integrated into core nursing curricula and continuing professional development in Nigeria. Hospital

administrators should prioritise funding for such training to improve patient outcomes. Palliative care education, nursing, pain management, quality of life, cancer, Nigeria, comparative study This study provides empirical evidence from a Nigerian context supporting investment in nurse-led palliative care training as a feasible strategy to enhance oncology patient care where specialist services are scarce.
