Feasibility Study of an Online Intervention to Support Male Spouses of Women With Breast Cancer

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Male spouses of women with breast cancer undergo sudden changes as a result of their partner’s diagnosis (Duggleby, Bally, Cooper, Doell, & Thomas, 2012; Duggleby et al., 2015; Struthers-Montford et al., 2016), including changes in their roles, responsibilities, relationship to their partner, and mental health (Duggleby et al., 2015). They also can feel powerless, uncertain, and isolated (Duggleby, Bally, et al., 2012; Duggleby et al., 2015; Zahlis & Lewis, 2010). Male spouses require strategies and interventions that help them engage in hope, communicate with their partners, find support, and access information about breast cancer (Duggleby, Bally, et al., 2012; Duggleby et al., 2015). However, few resources and interventions are available to help them during this time of significant changes (Duggleby, Bally, et al., 2012; Duggleby et al., 2015).

Cochrane and Lewis’s (2005) systematic review of intervention studies for male spouses of women with breast cancer reported four studies published from 1966 to 2004. They found a consensus within the literature that interventions for male spouses are needed, with research in this area lagging “far behind descriptive work” (p. 331). The four interventions discussed by Cochrane and Lewis (2005)