The Perceived Value of Online Cancer Resources Among Loved Ones of People With Cancer

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OBJECTIVES: To examine the experiences with, opinions of, and reactions to online cancer information of loved ones of people with cancer.

SAMPLE & SETTING: 10 loved ones of people with cancer recruited from a pool of participants who completed a survey about cancer website experiences.

METHODS & VARIABLES: Qualitative, semistructured interview questions concerned the perceived value of and reactions to online cancer information. Responses were analyzed using a grounded theory approach.

RESULTS: Cancer websites play an important role, often serving as a first source of information. All participants said the Internet was helpful but could lead to negative emotions or misinformation. Future efforts should seek to mitigate the negative effects associated with the use of such websites.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: Healthcare providers should direct people with cancer and their loved ones to reputable websites that provide support in conjunction with information, or work toward developing their own in-depth resources.

KEYWORDS loved ones; online cancer resources; online cancer information; cancer

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