Experiences of Turkish Parents of Hospitalized Children With Cancer During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Study

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PURPOSE: To describe the experiences of Turkish parents of hospitalized children with cancer during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PARTICIPANTS & SETTING: Participants were recruited at the pediatric hematology-oncology clinic of a university hospital in Turkey. A purposive sampling strategy was used to identify participants. Parents who had a child aged 0–18 years with cancer were eligible.

METHODODOLOGIC APPROACH: This study was conducted using a descriptive qualitative research design. Semistructured individual interviews with 14 parents of children with cancer were used for data collection. Data were analyzed using the content analysis method.

FINDINGS: Two main themes with related subthemes were identified that revealed the lived experiences of parents of children with cancer: being a parent in the midst of a pandemic and parents’ pathways toward coping with difficulties.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: Pediatric oncology nurses can develop clinical practices that help parents to cope with anxiety about COVID-19. Nurses should share with parents current and valid information about the child’s care during the pandemic. Future research should examine the experiences of children with cancer and their parents from different cultures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

KEYWORDS parents; children with cancer; COVID-19 pandemic; experience; nursing

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