A Descriptive Survey Study of Patient Needs and Preferences for Cancer Pain Self-Management Support

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OBJECTIVES: To characterize the needs and preferences for pain self-management support (SMS) among patients with cancer during the transition of cancer care from the hospital to the home setting.

SAMPLE & SETTING: 38 participants with cancer pain at a research-intensive cancer center in New England.

METHODS & VARIABLES: A descriptive, cross-sectional survey study was conducted to investigate relationships among preferred and received support, extent and management of transitional change, and pain outcomes. Pain intensity and interference were measured using the Brief Pain Inventory–Short Form, transitional change was measured using the Measurement of Transitions in Cancer Scale, and SMS was measured using dichotomous questions.

RESULTS: About half of participants reported concordance between preferred and received cancer pain SMS in the hospital and at home. The extent of transitional change in cancer care was found to be a significant predictor of average pain intensity in the hospital and pain interference at home. Satisfaction with cancer pain SMS was a significant predictor of pain intensity at home.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: The extent of change during care transitions should be considered when fulfilling patient needs and preferences for cancer pain SMS to optimize outcomes.

KEYWORDS self-management support; needs; preferences; cancer-associated pain; care transitions

ONF, 49(1), 46–57.

DOI 10.1188/22.ONF.46-57