

Spiritual Needs of Patients with Advanced Cancer in a cancer hospital

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BACKGROUND:Although it is widely recognised that people turn to spirituality in times of crises, the interest in exploring the spiritual needs of cancer patients is just beginning to grow. Many nurse clinicians have concerns about the difficulties of providing spiritual care for patients in China, possibly as a result of lack of knowledge and training. Otherwise, there has been little research exploring the spiritual needs of patients with advanced cancer in China.

HYPOTNESIS:The purpose of this study was to research the spiritual needs of patients with advanced cancer in an cancer hospital in Tianjin, China.

METHODS: A total of 180 inpatients with mixed cancer sites and of IV tumour stages were surveyed cross-sectionally. Instruments is the Chinese version of the Spiritual Needs Assessment for Patients (SNAP) which consists of 23 total items in 3 domains: psychosocial (n = 5), spiritual (n = 13), and religious(n = 5).Responses are categorized on a scale of 1–4: “Very much,” “Somewhat,” “Not very much,” and “Not at all.” Descriptive statistics were applied for data analysis.

RESULTS:Mean participant age was 54 ± 9.2 years, 76.7% had a high school or college education. 6.7% were Buddhist, 1.1% were Christian, 92.2% identified no religious affiliation, 88.9% described themselves as spiritual but not religious, 65.6% reported unmet spiritual needs, and 78.9% wanted help meeting their spiritual needs. Otherwise, “Sharing your thoughts and feelings with people close to you” has the highest score in the part of psychosocial needs. “Overcoming fears” is the most evident spiritual need, and “Religious rituals such as chant,

prayer, lighting candles or incense, anointing, or communion” is needed more than other religious needs by advanced cancer patients.