The Use Of Patients Concerns Inventory (PCI) In Managing Oral Cancer Patients

J M Hatta, J G Doss

Oral Cancer Research and Coordinating Centre, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Department of Community Dentistry, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Aim

The purpose of this study was to assess the feasibility of using the Patients Concerns Inventory (PCI) to identify oral cancer patients’ concerns during consultation in oral and maxillofacial specialist clinics in Malaysia.

Method

Patients were recruited from seven selected hospitals in Malaysia from April till July 2011. The PCI was self-administered (with assistance where needed) to patients for them to select their related concerns before their consultations with specialists. After the consultation, face-to-face patient interviews were done on the usefulness of the PCI.

Results

66.7% of the patients were elderly, 63.9% female, 55.6% Indian, 63.9% had lower education and half had the lowest household income. Patients were mostly (87.5%) post-treated and at cancer stage III/IV (63.9%). Two-thirds of oral cancer comprised of mainly tongue (33.3%) and buccal mucosa (33.3%), 59.7% had surgery. The mean time taken for patients to complete the PCI was 5.9 minutes (95% CI 5.1, 5.7 minutes). The PCI issues (by domain) that were selected (in terms of order) were patients’ physical domain (94.4%); emotional issues (31.9%); personal function (30.6%); diet-related function (16.7%); economic status (6.9%); and social or family relationship issues (4.2%). No new issues emerged. Significant associations included patients’ age with personal function (p=0.02); patients’ education level with both their emotional status (p=0.05) and social/family relationship issues (p=0.04); and patients’ TNM staging with personal function (p=0.03).

Patients’ mean feasibility score for the PCI was 5.3 (95% CI 5.1, 5.5) out of 6. Most (93.1%) patients found that the PCI was feasible in identifying their issues of concerns to be discussed during consultation.

Conclusion

Majority of the oral cancer patients found the PCI to be useful in identifying their health-related quality of life concerns during consultation, thus favorably indicating its future use to enhance oral cancer patient management during routine clinical care.