

Abstract

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Quality of life of Breast cancer patients treated at Teaching Hospital Karapitiya, Sri Lanka

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Background: Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the world. Breast cancer (BC) is the second most common cancer among women globally as well as in Sri Lanka. Quality of Life (QOL) is a subjective perception a person has of their position in life and it includes various aspects of domains like physical, psychological, social and environment. Aim of this study was to assess QOL among BC patients treated at a tertiary care hospital in Southern Sri Lanka.

Methods: Ninety-seven patients from the oncology unit of the Teaching Hospital Karapitiya were included in this cross-sectional study. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire (World Health Organization – Quality of Life- Brief) and extracts from patient notes after obtaining informed consent from each subject with sufficient physical and mental stability to assess the quality of life among study subjects.

Results: Age ranged from 31 to 71 years with a mean of 52 years (SD=9). Localized tumor (T stage) was presented in 84% patients at the time of diagnosis and the rest were on severe stages (node and metastasis). The mean±SD score of overall QOL was 248±34 in this study subjects. Further, the physical domain (mean±SD) had 61±12, psychological domain had 64±12 and environmental domain had 69±9 levels respectively. However, it was evident that the lowest score in the social domain with mean score (±SD) of 48±14. Further subjects with metastasis and resultant disabilities had low mean QOL scores when compared with those who had localized tumor and no disabilities respectively.

Conclusion: Cancer patients have many psycho-social needs which should be fulfilled in addition to improving quality of life which is an important aspect of modern health care. QOL measures have become a vital part of health outcomes and are very important aspect of chronic diseases which are not curable. Therefore, QOL measurements provide a meaningful way to determine the impact of health care services.

Keywords: Breast cancer, Psychosocial factors, QOL, WHOQOL-BREF