Being in the treatment course for esophageal cancer - a qualitative study of Patients' and relatives' experiences and the process of decision making during the treatment period

Kaas Larsen, Malene; Birkelund, Regner; Mortensen, Michael Bau; Schultz, Helen

Publication date:
2019

Citation for published version (APA):

Terms of use
This work is brought to you by the University of Southern Denmark through the SDU Research Portal. Unless otherwise specified it has been shared according to the terms for self-archiving. If no other license is stated, these terms apply:

- You may download this work for personal use only.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying this open access version

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details and we will investigate your claim.
Please direct all enquiries to puresupport@bib.sdu.dk

Download date: 29. Apr. 2021
Introduction
Cancer of the esophagus is a serious and potentially lethal disease. Surgery and perioperative chemotherapy is the established treatment resulting in a treatment course of 6-8 months.

Aim
To explore patients with esophageal cancer and their relatives’ experiences during the treatment period and the process of participation in treatment decisions.

Methods
The study employed a qualitative methodology, scientifically placed within a phenomenological-hermeneutic framework with a prospective longitudinal design. A field study with participant observations and interviews was conducted with 16 patients and 16 relatives. See figure below.

Results
Article 1: Themes related to patients
• Dealing with the definitive diagnosis
• Being between expert knowledge and everyday life knowledge
• Being in no man’s land

Article 2: Themes related to relatives
• Being an anchor on the sideline in uncertainty
• Surveying the scene of treatment
• Making decisions is not my department

Conclusion
Patients with esophageal cancer encounter an alien world of disease and treatment and are struggling to gain control of their new life situation. Maintaining everyday life activities was important and helped the patients and relatives deal with the diagnosis and forthcoming treatment. The patients and relatives felt they did not have any option but to accept and go along with treatment decisions. When it came to participating in decisions about treatment, relatives had a passive and subordinated role.

References:

Funding: Odense University Hospital, Louis-Hansen Foundation