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Quality of life of family caregivers of patients with a stoma: A cross-sectional study from Iran

Rafiei, H.^a Rashvand, F.^a, Malmir, S.^b

^aSocial Determinants of Health Research Center, Research Institute for Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases, Qazvin University of Medical Sciences, Iran

^bNursing Department, Faculty of Medical Science, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

Aim:

The family plays a key role in supporting and caring for patients who have a gastrointestinal stoma because of cancer. This study investigated the quality of life of family members caring for such patients.

Methods:

A descriptive study was conducted in 2020 in Iran. The study sample consisted of 250 family members caring for cancer patients with an intestinal stoma. The Caregiver Quality of Life Index–Cancer scale was used to measure quality of life. This scale has 35 questions, which are categorised into four subscales: mental/emotional burden; lifestyle disruption; positive adaptation; and financial concerns. The highest possible total score is 140 (35 in each subscale), and a high score indicates a poor quality of life.

Results:

A total of 250 carers took part in the study. Of these, 143 (57.2%) were men and the average age was 35.1 years. Mean scores of mental/emotional burden, lifestyle disruption, positive adaptation, and financial concerns were 28.4 ± 4.1 , 17.3 ± 3.2 , 19.8 ± 2.8 , and 8.6 ± 1.2 respectively. No significant relationship was found between participants' quality of life and demographic variables.

Conclusion:

Carers' quality of life is relatively poor. Carers' quality of life need to be improved and support programmes, devised and delivered by nurses, could have a role in this.