

Joint Event on
33rd International Conference on
ONCOLOGY NURSING AND CANCER CARE
and
16th ASIA PACIFIC PATHOLOGY CONGRESS
September 17-18, 2018 Tokyo Japan

Development and feasibility test of a novel evidence-based and theory-based co-designed intervention to support Saudi women with breast cancer

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Introduction & Aim: Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Saudi women. The cancer and treatment can produce many different psycho-social issues and physical symptoms. Different studies reported a low overall quality of life among Saudi women with breast cancer. There is evidence that Self-Management Support (SMS) interventions delivered by nurses have the potential to help reduce these symptoms and enhance the quality of life. In Saudi Arabia, the provision of SMS is unknown and therefore, this study aims to develop and test the feasibility of an intervention to support Saudi women with breast cancer.

Method: This study is guided by Medical Research Council (MRC) framework for developing and evaluating complex interventions which involve a systematic multistage process. Stage one involved an evidence synthesis by conducting a systematic literature review and qualitative in-depth interviews using a purposive sampling with 23 Saudi women newly diagnosed with breast cancer in three hospitals to understand their needs and concerns. Ethical approval and consents were taken and the theoretical saturation of data was achieved. The digitally-recorded data and field notes were transcribed, organized using MAXQDA software and analyzed using a thematic analysis. Stage two included developing a self-management program by applying a theory and evidence to identify effective components to support patients alongside consultations with health care professionals and patients. Stage three will include a training workshop for nurses to ensure fidelity who will implement intervention on patients using a pre- and post-intervention study to evaluate its feasibility, acceptability and potential impact using mixed method.

Result: The literature and qualitative study showed that these women have physical, psycho-social, practical and informational needs. The theory of social learning and self-confidence developed by Bandura has been applied and the literature shows that components such as group-based intervention, education, goal setting, action plans and navigating health system and resources are effective to support patients successfully.

Conclusion: Saudi women with breast cancer experience challenges to manage disease and treatment-related symptoms. It is anticipated that delivering self-management intervention will help to enhance quality of life.

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