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YOUNG WOMEN WITH BREAST CANCER- USING THE HEALING TOOL; WRITING BLOGS

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among women, the risk of breast cancer increases with age, it is most common after the age of 50, but reports have been published showing an increase in the incidence and mortality in young women i.e. < 40 years of age. Young women use blogs on the internet to describe their experience with breast cancer. Blogs represent an untapped source of knowledge for health care professionals. The purpose of this qualitative, exploratory study was to interpret and describe how a breast cancer diagnosis and its' treatment affect these women's life situations and how they manage their new situation. These women need social support and networks to share personal stories and experiences, but also to discuss disease issues. This social support could be found within writing personal blogs about their breast cancer experience. This blogging activity, could be seen as online health resources and can promote good health. There is some kind of healing effect due to expressive writing, leading to online support as blogging. Even though some of the women knew that they would not manage they continued writing blogs and at the end of life their family or friends wrote the blogs. It was important to inform each other, strengthen each other and share the experiences with other interested persons around. Sometimes the blogs were a source for validating information received from health care professionals. This is useful information for us health care professionals to include in our actions.

Biography

Carina Berterö graduated from University of Jönköping as a registered nurse, continuing with a bachelor degree, adding a diploma in education and then a master's degree in surgical and medical care at Linköping university. In 1996 she obtained her PhD from Linköping University, with the thesis: Living with leukaemia: Studies on quality of life, interaction and caring. She is a Professor in Nursing Science at the Department of Medical and Health Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, Linköping University, Sweden. Her research area includes palliative care, oncology nursing, health and well-being, nursing/caring theory and empiric nursing, concepts, women issues and genus aspects.

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