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Evaluation by the nursing team of palliative care: a Merleau-Ponty phenomenological perspective

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To observe an evaluation by the nursing team in relation to the nursing attention provided to the patient in palliative care. **Method:** This is a descriptive-exploratory study which has adopted a qualitative approach. It will be performed in a private hospital in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The subjects of this research are nurses and nursing technicians working in the palliative care unit of the hospital under consideration. We will follow a research protocol that enables individual characterization in terms of socio-demographic and functional variables. In addition, a semi-structured questionnaire will be used to observe the evaluation of these professionals of palliative care. The variables and the items that compose this instrument will be analyzed in thematic categories.

Keywords: Perception; Medical Oncology; Palliative Care

PROBLEM SITUATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

During my personal path, I have observed health professionals (including nurses and nursing technicians) empirically. These are individuals who provide direct assistance to oncological patients during the palliation phase and who recognize the importance of this care to the patients involved. However, according to the World Health Organization, this process of assistance diverges from the principles that should regulate the attention to be provided⁽¹⁾. This fact disturbed me, generating a profound uneasiness from the moment I stepped into the academic environment. When I concluded my undergraduate degree, and then started to work as a supervising nurse in this private health institution, my concerns relating to the care assistance provided to terminal patients were still bothering me. And, from this moment, a mix of questions emerged with regard to the evaluation of this target-population by the nursing team concerned. These were so distinguishing and at the same time so challenging in terms of the assistance and the human relations which were established. Based on these first observations while in Academia which later matured properly from a professional perspective, I realized that the observed and experienced situations deserved to be fully studied and analyzed. Consequently, this study will imply a return view with regard to my own practice in terms of assistance. Based on this line of thinking, my research has, as an object of study, the evaluation by the nursing team of the palliative care provided, as cancer is one of the most important problems in Brazilian public health due to its incidence and associated high mortality rate.

OBJECTIVES

To observe the evaluation by the nursing team of the palliative care in oncology from the phenomenological reference point of Merleau-Ponty⁽²⁾; to indicate the implications of this perception in nursing praxis; to elaborate an educational technology tool in a blog format

with regard to humanized care towards the patient in palliative care, aiming at the education of the nursing team.

METHOD

This is a descriptive and exploratory study, adopting a qualitative approach⁽³⁾, which has been developed in two phases: bibliographical research and fieldwork.

The bibliographical research will include a review of books, journals, magazines and other bibliographical sources relevant to this study. The fieldwork will be performed through a participative observation approach and individual interviews aimed at capturing the evaluation by health professionals of terminal oncologic patients.

The study scenario will be a private hospital in the city of Rio de Janeiro, composed of a medical clinic, a general surgery clinic and an emergency unit that are able to diagnose illness using hard technology and treatment in surgical, oncological and palliative levels in the terminal state.

The interviewed subjects will be nursing technicians and nurses who had worked in the clinic and in the surgical sections of the hospital for at least one year, working directly with terminal oncological patients. To perform such interviews, a guide with open questions will be produced. The data collection will start after approval by the Ethics Committee, and will last for six months.

The data and results obtained will be analyzed and interpreted, with the aim of identifying wider categories that correlate to each other and the concepts of funded perception in existential phenomenology, supported by the theory of Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

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Project Data

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