

ooo88 Patients and Caregivers' Experience and Perceptions of Different Modalities of Enteral Feeding

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Aims: With an aging population, there is a concomitant increase in number of patients with dysphagia; and hence increase in prevalence of enteral feeding. In order to better support this group of patients, it is of interest to first understand their experiences living with an nasogastric tube (NGT)/percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy tube (PEG) or caring for their loved ones with NGT/PEG.

This study aimed to explore patients and caregivers' experiences and perceptions of different modalities of enteral feeding.

Methodology: Design. A qualitative explorative descriptive study design with purposive sampling was adopted.

Methods. A total of eight patients who are receiving ongoing long term enteral feeding and nine carers were recruited over the data collection period of August to December 2017. One to one interviews were conducted and audio-recorded. An inductive content analysis approach, with open coding, creation of categories and abstraction of data was adopted.

Result: Three main themes were generated: (1) factors influencing choice of mode of enteral feeding; respondents narrated factors such as need to 'conceal' illness, need to be independent and previous bad experience with alternative modality; (2) Identified informational, emotional and physical needs. Respondents reported the need for support in terms of information on the different modalities, and training on how to care or self-care; and (3) individual perception and attitude towards life with enteral feeding. Most respondents portrayed a positive outlook to life; despite that they could no longer participate in communal 'eating'; which is a large part of social norm in Asian cultures.

Conclusion: Patients experienced major lifestyle changes upon initiation of long term enteral feeding. Patients with PEG found it easier to integrate enteral tube feeding into daily lives. Understanding their needs, perception and attitude towards living with enteral tube feeding will inform the development of strategies to empower future patients in choice of modality for enteral feeding.