

00188 Determining Nurses' Nutrition Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in Their Care of Children With Cancer

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Aims: The study aims to explore the nurses' nutrition knowledge, attitudes and practices in their care of children with cancer in the Paediatric Oncology ward.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study using a self-administered questionnaire was carried out over a one-month period in a paediatric oncology ward in KK Women's and Children's Hospital. All nurses in the ward were invited to participate. The questionnaire was designed to: (1) assess the knowledge of nutritional needs of children with cancer and the principles of the low bacteria diet; (2) self-assess the knowledge on nutrition support and elicit topics of interests. The data was analysed using descriptive and correlation statistics.

Result: Questionnaire completion was 86% (77/90). Knowledge of low bacteria diet was good (median scores 12/14; Interquartile range (IQR): 10-13). Knowledge of nutritional needs of children was lower than knowledge of low bacteria diet, (median scores 7/10; IQR: 6-8). There was a significant difference between local and overseas trained nurses ($p=0.035$).

Most nurses (68%, $n=51$) felt confident to answer queries on low bacteria diet. Self-assessment of knowledge was poor in few areas: assessing food intake against energy requirements (1.3%, $n=1$ rated as good/ excellent knowledge), dosage of oral nutritional supplements required (4%, $n=3$) signs of malnutrition (44.6%, $n= 33$). Perceived relevance of nutrition care to job scope and interest to learn more about these areas were high (70-86.4% rated relevant/ very relevant and 74-81% rated interested/ very interested).

Conclusion: This study demonstrated nurses has good nutritional knowledge regarding the low bacteria diet but needs training in performing nutritional assessment. This study has provided useful information to guide our design of a nutrition education programme for the nurses. By equipping nurses with knowledge and skills to deliver first-line basic nutrition care to this group of vulnerable patients, timely and appropriate nutritional intervention can have positive impact on their outcomes.