

00285 **Understanding Illness Experience, Long-term Consequences and Unmet Supportive Care Needs After Surviving Colorectal Cancer: A Qualitative Study**

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Aims: The proposed study aims to understand the illness experience, treatment consequences and long-term unmet supportive care needs among colorectal cancer survivors following 2-year post treatment period in Singapore. Specifically the study seeks to: 1) Explore evolving experience of illness for people living with colorectal cancer. 2) Examine the process of treatment decision-making and its physical, psychological and social impacts on survivors. 3) Identify cancer survivors' unmet supportive care needs in managing long-term consequences of cancer treatment.

Methodology: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with colorectal survivors who had completed curative treatment. Patients were recruited from an outpatient clinic of Singapore General Hospital. Interviews were audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis was conducted using NVivo 12 software based on a ground theory approach.

Result: Data saturation was achieved with 30 patients. Participants displayed a wide range of responses towards diagnosis. Most involved their family members in making treatment decisions and mentioned the importance of a positive attitude and engaging in activities to cope with treatment. For transition from a patient to a survivor, key themes were family support and changes in diet and daily activities. Some long-term consequences of post-treatment included altered bowel habits, peripheral neuropathy and depression. Unmet supportive care needs included financial needs, need for dietary information, workplace challenges and need for alternative treatments.

Conclusion: Colorectal survivors face multiple challenges, which healthcare professionals might not be familiar with. This study identified four main themes: financial needs, need for dietary information, workplace challenges and need for alternative treatment post-surgery. Although there is no one-size-fits-all solution, targeted interventions such as information booklets, individualized nursing, appropriate screening and referral can reduce some of these unmet needs. Results of this study will inform the development of a validated questionnaire and tailored national care plans for the local population to improve survivorship experience.