

“I CAN’T COPE WITH WHAT I WAS DOING BEFORE”: CHALLENGES AND NEEDS RELATED TO PERSISTENT CANCER-RELATED COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

AUTHORS

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AFFILIATIONS

Introduction

- Many cancer survivors experience cognitive impairments called Cancer-Related Cognitive Impairments (CRCI) [1]
- Key domain of unmet needs; impacts quality of life and daily functioning
- there are no purpose-built unmet needs assessment tool for CRCI [2]
- Requires an understanding of CRCI-specific challenges and unmet needs

Aim

Explore the perspectives of cancer survivors and health professionals in order to reveal what challenges and associated needs exist for cancer survivors with persistent CRCI relating to their cognitive difficulties

Methodology and Analytical Approach

- An in-depth qualitative design
- Constructivist approach using semi-structured interviews
- Reflexive Thematic Analysis [3]

Participants

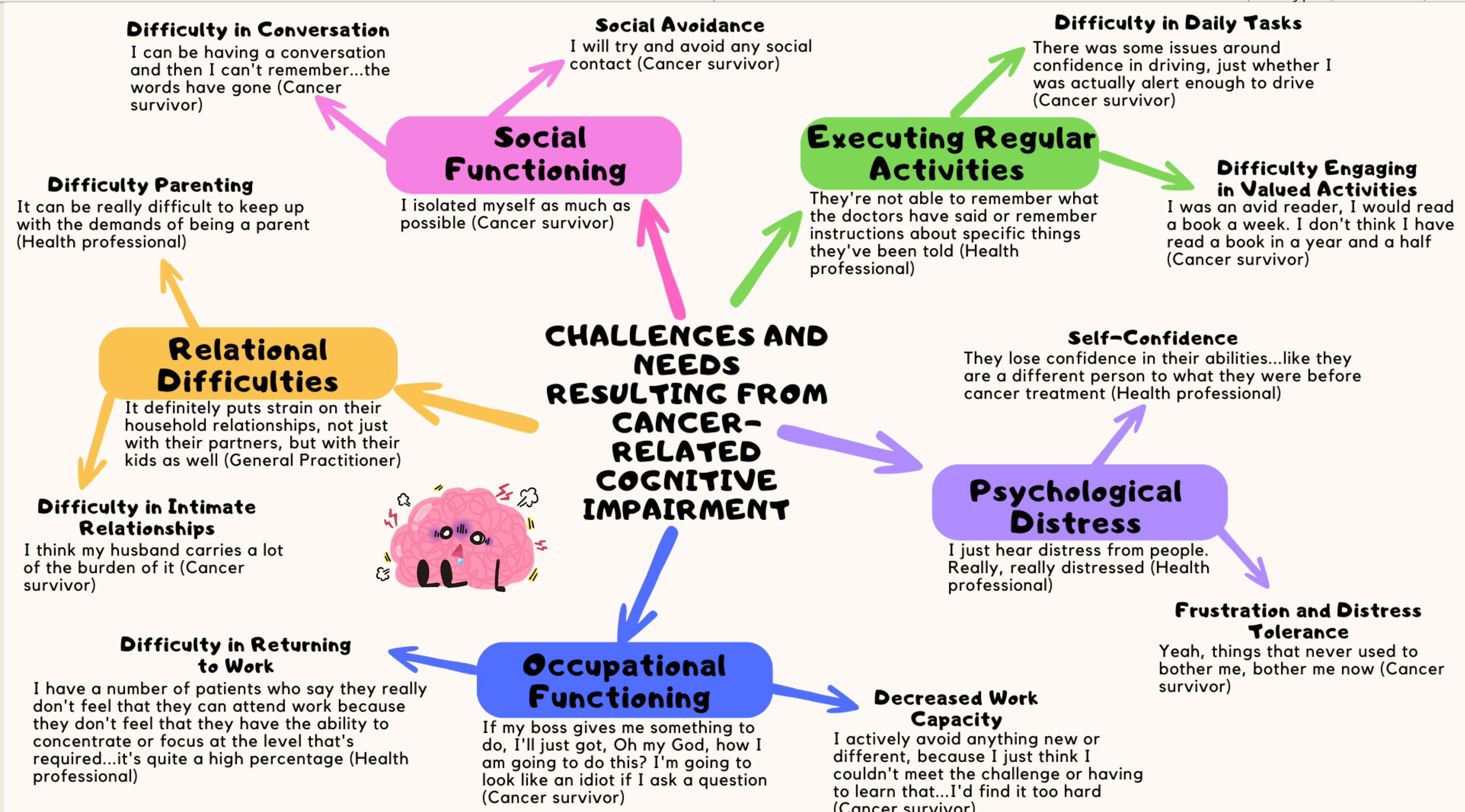
- Health Professionals:**
- N = 19; 13 different disciplines; various levels of experience; various settings; 2 countries; M Age 42.21 (10.53); 89% female
- Cancer Survivors:**
- N = 32; no current evidence of disease; no treatment M= 5.5 years; 7 cancer types; 4 counties; various treatments; M Age 56.03 (10.02); 78% female.

Results

The thematic analysis resulted in five overarching themes, each with two subthemes:

- (1) **Executing Regular Activities**
 - Difficulty in Daily Tasks
 - Difficulty Engaging in Valued Activities
- (2) **Relational Difficulties**
 - Difficulty Parenting
 - Difficulty in Intimate Relationships
- (3) **Occupational Functioning**
 - Difficulty Returning to Work
 - Decreased Work Capacity
- (4) **Psychological Distress**
 - Self Confidence
 - Frustration and Distress
- (5) **Social Functioning**
 - Difficulty in Conversation
 - Social Avoidance

Additional **Informational Needs** domain.



Conclusion

- CRCI was found to directly produce a range of challenges that negatively, and persistently, impact cancer survivors' quality of life
- There were a range of needs associated with these challenges.
- This research can be used to inform treatment and supportive care priority areas directly relating to CRCI.
- This research will inform the development of a future purpose-built needs assessment tool for CRCI

Publication



References

- [1] Mayo, S. J. et al.(2021). Cancer-related cognitive impairment in patients with non-central nervous system malignancies: an overview for oncology providers from the MASCC Neurological Complications Study Group. Supportive Care in Cancer, 29, 2821-2840.
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- [3] Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health, 11(4), 589-597.