

Effectiveness of the Educational program for healthcare professionals to support cancer patients with minor children

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Introduction

- Cancer patients with minor children have been shown to experience psychological distress and to want information about parental cancer such as how to tell children about cancer, how children react emotionally to a parental cancer diagnosis, and practical support on these issues.¹⁾
- However, there are few learning opportunities for healthcare professionals on knowledge and skills to support cancer patients with minor children.
- The specialized educational program for healthcare professionals to support cancer patients with minor children (EP) was developed according to the findings of previous surveys on the needs of patients and healthcare professionals.

Purpose

To explore the effectiveness of the specialized educational program for healthcare professionals in supporting cancer patients with minor children.

Methods

- **Study design** : Longitudinal observational study
 - **Study period** : Between October 2023 and March 2024.
 - **Eligibility criteria**: The healthcare professionals who participated in the educational program.
 - The participants evaluated their communication behaviors, knowledge, and confidence in communicating with patients both before and three months after the EP.
 - **Questionnaire**: Behavior changes(6 items), Knowledge and confidence(10 items)²⁾
 - **Statistical analysis**: Descriptive Statistics and Univariate Analysis(Wilcoxon signed-rank sum test)
- All statistical analyses were carried out using with IBM SPSS Statics 26.0, and statistical significance was defined as a probability (p)-value <0.01.

Specialized educational program in supporting cancer patients raising children

- **Target group** :Healthcare professionals (physicians, nurses, pharmacists, psychologists, medical social worker[MSW]) with at least 5 years of experience in cancer care
- **Educational objectives**:
 - i. Recognize the need for support
 - ii. Provide basic adequate care in situations.
 - iii. Identify individual needs and collaborate with multidisciplinary.

● E-Learning (1 hour)

A lecture included basic knowledge required for patients and their children, outlining the necessary steps, and timing for providing support.

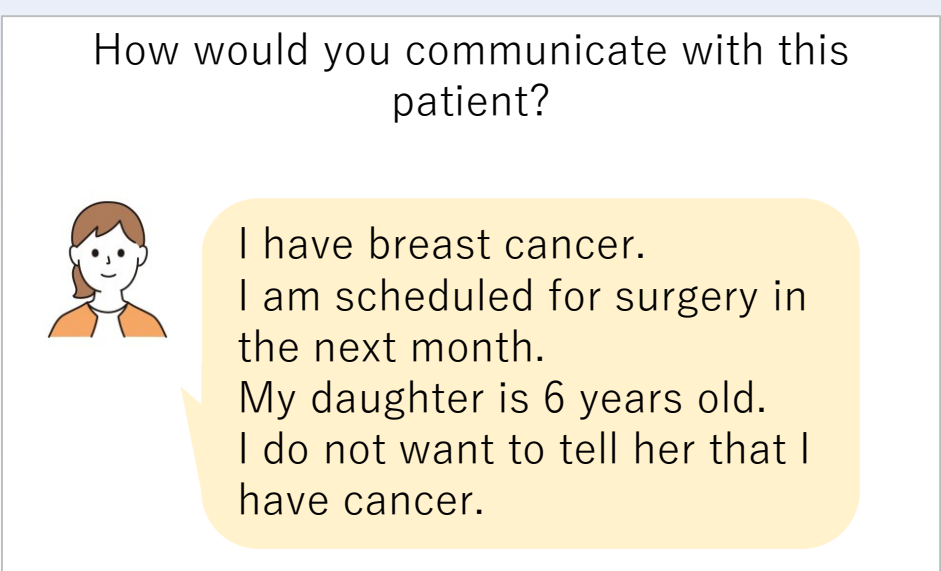
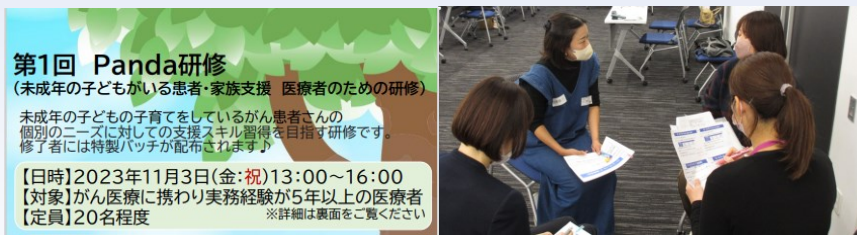
● On-site workshops (3 hours)

A lecture on communication skills.

Communication skill training (role play sessions) consisting of two scenarios , participants take on the roles of patient and medical professional once each.

-Scenario 1: the patient didn't want the child to know about their cancer.

-Scenario 2: a healthcare professional approaches a child who comes to the hospital to see their dying parent.



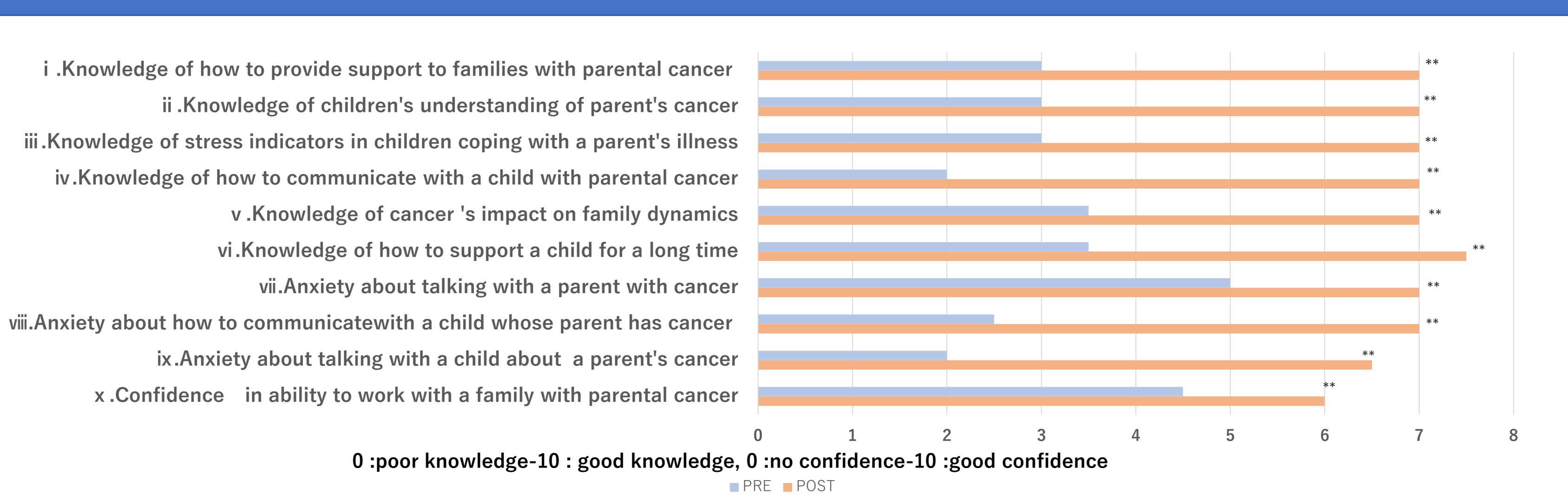
Conclusion

- This educational program may have led positive behavior change how health care professionals support of cancer patients with minor children
- In addition, paticipants showed more knowledge and confidence after the program. This suggests that the program is useful and can help these professionals provide better care for cancer patients who have minor children with confidence.

Results

Table 1. Participants Characteristics (n = 24)			Table2. Behavior changes three months after participation in the educational program				
		n(%)					
Profession	Nurse	21(87.5)	More concerned about whether a client has minor children	14	9	0	1
	MSW	2(8.3)					
	Medical doctor	1(4.2)					
Years of Cancer Care	5~7	6(25.0)	Became aware of and approached patients with minor children.	13	7	2	0
	8~10	3(12.5)					
	11+	15(62.5)					
Frequency of support for cancer patients with minor children	Several times a week or more	3(12.5)	More consciously provided information (booklets) to patients with minor children	7	12	3	0
	At least once a week	3(12.5)					
	At least once a month	14(58.3)					
	Almost no such opportunities.	4(16.7)					
			Being more sensitive to the feelings of patients with minor children	12	10	0	2
			More sharing of information about patients with minor children with other health care providers than before	10	10	2	0
			Becoming aware of my powerlessness.	7	13	4	0

Table 3. Changes in knowledge and confidence scores before and three months after participation in the educational program



References

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- 2) Fasciano M. K, When a parent has cancer: a community based program for school personnel. Psycho-Oncology.2007;16 :158-167.

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