

Heiti á kandidatuppgávu

Unges behov for støtte og inddragelse, når mor har brystkræft.

Abstract

The present master's thesis is based on a qualitative interview study of adolescent children between 12 and 18 years old of mothers' recently diagnosed with breast cancer. From a phenomenological stance eight individual interviews and one focus group interview were conducted with a total of ten adolescents. The purpose of the study was to clarify adolescents' needs for support and involvement in the early stages of their mother's illness and in accordance with The Danish Health Authorities recommendations, in order for healthcare personnel to target appropriate interventions.

Analysis was conducted thematically. The study finds adolescent relatives having difficulty articulating their own needs – perhaps because they were inquired in the early stages of their mothers' breast cancer illness. The study uncovers needs by the general impression of the adolescents' collective statements; they have a great need for factual information about breast cancer and treatment, emotional reactions are associated with subjective prior understanding of the threat, the breast cancer disease presents to the family, and adolescents' primarily discuss factual aspects of the disease with others, whilst they keep emotional aspects to themselves.

Group-based interventions are best suited for psychosocially strained families, and healthcare personnel should be particularly attentive to this group. Healthcare personnel should consider arranging theme-nights about breast cancer and treatment in order to establish contact with families less psychosocially strained. However, more studies are needed to clarify factors associated with adolescents' adjustment issues following a parent's life-threatening illness and which groups of relatives most in need of supporting interventions.