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Individual-Based vs Group-Based Psychoeducation Sessions for Breast Cancer Survivors Following Radiotherapy (RT): Impact on Health-Related Quality of Life and Self-Efficacy

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Background

Research suggests that Group-Based Psychoeducation (GBP) is an effective alternative to Individual-Based Psychoeducation (IBP) for improving Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQoL) in Breast Cancer Survivors (BCS) (Dolbeault 2009; Helgeson, 2001) and is an established practice in breast cancer treatment. However, there is a paucity of research exploring possible mediating effects of patient extraversion on outcomes.

Aim

To explore whether a GBP session improved patients HRQoL and Self-Efficacy (SE) compared to an IBP and if this was influenced by patients' extroversion.

Method

Fifty BCS receiving RT at Leeds Institute of Oncology attending IBP or GBP sessions led by experienced RT professionals were recruited. Questionnaires assessing SE and HRQoL were completed pre, post and six weeks after session attendance. Personality was assessed at baseline. Six BCS participated in follow-up audio-recorded semi-structured interviews.

Results

Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences between IBP and GBP in the Quality of Life in Adult Cancer Survivors (QLACS) generic and cancer-specific summary scores, and there was no effect of extroversion. Thematic framework analysis suggested that patients experienced some post-discharge anxiety supported by the findings that SE diminished over time.

Conclusion

The comparable HRQoL scores supports the use of GBP as an acceptable alternative to IBP with associated cost savings in service provision and screening for personality factors may not be required. Future research will screen to stratify patients who display a clinical need for individual support to target resources effectively. Further, the findings suggest a need for post-discharge interventions to counteract patients reduced perceived SE.