

252 | “Walking two paths; end of life and hope for prolonged survival years” The experiences of adolescents and young adults with an uncertain and/or poor cancer prognosis: A qualitative study

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Background/rationale or Objectives/purpose: Increasingly more adolescent and young adult (AYA) patients with an uncertain and/or poor cancer prognosis (UPCP) are gaining life years because of novel treatments or refinement of established therapies, and sometimes even face the prospect of long-term disease control. This study aims to examine the challenges of AYAs with a UPCP in daily life to inform the development of AYA care programs.

Methodology or Methods: Semi-structured in depth interviews were conducted among AYAs with a UPCP. Since we expected differences in experiences between three AYA subgroups we aimed to interview 16 patients per subgroup: (1) traditional survivors, (2) low-grade glioma survivors and (3) new survivors. Interviews were analyzed using elements of grounded theory. AYA patients were actively involved as research partners.

Impact on practice or Results: In total 48 AYAs with UPCP participated and shared their challenges in daily life. We generated seven primary themes: (1) feeling inferior to previous self and others, (2) feeling alone, (3) not in the lead of my life, (4) constant confrontation, (5) anticipatory grief for the life I didn't get, (6) feeling guilty for the ones who will be left behind and, (7) loss of control over the future.

Discussion or Conclusions: The seven themes reflect that AYAs with a UPCP are walking on two paths at the same time, in which one path is focused on the end of life and the other path is full of hope for prolonged survival years. The results of this study provide input for new or adapted AYA care programs for AYAs living with a UPCP.

260 | Understanding the Experience of Cancer in Canadian Young Adults: A review of the YACPRIME study

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Background/rationale or Objectives/purpose: The Young Adults with Cancer in their PRIME (YACPRIME) study is a collaborative patient-oriented partnership between researchers and Young Adult Cancer Canada, the leading support and advocacy organization devoted to young adults (YAs) living with, through, and beyond cancer. The objective of this national survey of YAs diagnosed with cancer in Canada was to understand how cancer is different for YAs to inform research, practice, and advocacy.

Methodology or Methods: Between 2017 and 2018, the YACPRIME study recruited a cross-sectional sample of 622 Canadian YAs between the ages of 15 and 39 years who completed measures of quality of life, coping, psychological distress, fear of cancer recurrence, body image, sleep disturbance, social support, fertility, financial health, and post-traumatic growth. Matched non-cancer peer comparisons were conducted, where available, using national Canadian datasets.

Impact on practice or Results: Collectively, the data published from the YACPRIME study demonstrate that YAs with cancer report significantly poorer physical and mental quality of life, greater overall psychological distress, and worse financial well-being than their non-cancer peers. YAs with cancer experience clinically significant fear of cancer recurrence and body image concerns, both of which persist well after treatment completion. Connection with cancer peers appears to promote post-traumatic growth in those with low social support.

Discussion or Conclusions: The YACPRIME study is the largest national, cross-sectional survey to quantitatively describe the mental health of AYAs diagnosed with cancer. Results of the study have revealed important targets for intervention and identified priorities for future research, clinical, and policy initiatives.

299 | Family Communication after an Older Parent's Blood Cancer Diagnosis: Midlife Adult Child Caregivers' Experiences of Openness, Avoidance, and Social Support

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Background/rationale or Objectives/purpose: Family communication about cancer is central to caregiving but can be very challenging. Families often avoid cancer-related topics, which can contribute to negative health outcomes and impede the exchange of social support. To identify adult child blood cancer caregivers' needs for communication skill development, we examined what they perceive enhances family communication, topics most challenging to discuss, and the roles of openness and support.

Methodology or Methods: A total of 121 adult child caregivers participated in an online survey recruited through The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. A thematic analysis was conducted on responses to an open-ended item about enhancing family communication. T-tests and regression analyses were conducted on responses to measures of cancer openness, cancer topic avoidance, and social support.

Impact on practice or Results: Thematic analyses indicate caregivers enhance family communication by utilizing digital communication modalities, prioritizing frequent communication, engaging in openness, establishing boundaries, kinkeeping, and enacting support. Statistical