Impact of a structured educational programme for caregivers of children with cancer on parental knowledge of the disease and paediatric clinical outcomes during the first year of treatment

Por: De la Maza, V (De la Maza, Veronica); Manriquez, M (Manriquez, Macarena); Castro, M (Castro, Magdalena); Viveros, P (Viveros, Paola); Fernandez, M (Fernandez, Maria); Vogel, E (Vogel, Evelyn); Pena, E (Pena, Erica); Santolaya, ME (Santolaya, Maria Elena); Villarroel, M (Villarroel, Milena); Torres, JP (Torres, Juan Pablo)

Abstract

Objective To assess the impact of a structured educational programme for caregivers of children with cancer on their level of knowledge about the disease and patient's clinical outcome. Methods This prospective, non-randomised, experimental study included caregivers of recently diagnosed children at two hospitals in Chile. Caregivers whose children were treated at the first centre were the structured education programme group (EPG), while the second hospital provided the standard care (SCG). We evaluated caregivers' level of knowledge on days 1, 10 and 90 as well as the children's clinical outcomes over 1 year of treatment. Results A total of 102 caregivers were enrolled between 2014 and 2015. Only the EPG showed a significant increase in knowledge between days 1 and 90. The rate of central venous catheter infections was significantly lower in the EPG versus SCG (7% versus 26%; p = .01). The risk ratio was 0.35 (95% CI = 0.13-0.94), and a log-rank test showed a statistically significant difference between the two groups (p = .018). There were also fewer Emergency Department visits in the EPG for fever episodes. Conclusion Providing a structured education to caregivers increased their level of knowledge and improved the clinical outcome of their children during the first year of treatment.

Palabras clave: cancer; caregivers; children; education; oncology; parents

KeyWords Plus: ACUTE LYMPHOBLASTIC-LEUKEMIA; PATIENT/FAMILY EDUCATION; ONCOLOGY

Información del autor

Dirección para petición de copias:
Universidad de Chile Univ Chile, Fac Med, Santiago, Chile.
Dirección correspondiente: Torres, JP (corresponding author)

Direcciones:

[ 1 ] Univ Chile, Fac Med, Dept Pediat, Res Unit, Hosp Dr Luis Calvo Mackenna, Santiago, Chile
[ 2 ] Arturo Lopez Perez Fdn, Res & Teaching Unit, Oncol Inst, Santiago, Chile
[ 3 ] Clin Las Condes, Acad Dept, Santiago, Chile
[ 4 ] Hosp Dr Luis Calvo Mackenna, Oncol Unit, Dept Pediat, Santiago, Chile
[ 5 ] Hosp Exequiel Gonzalez Cortes, Dept Pediat, Oncol Unit, Santiago, Chile
[ 6 ] Univ Chile, Fac Med, Dept Pediat, Infect Dis Unit, Hosp Dr Luis Calvo Mackenna, Santiago, Chile

Direcciones de correo electrónico: jptorres@uchile.cl

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