A Pilot Program of a Nurse-led Standardized Pre-chemotherapy Education for Patients on XELOX

Kwok KW (1), Chu YKF (1), Tong SY (2), Chan SY (1), Wong YY (1), Lo MY (1), Ling WM (1)

(1) Department of Clinical Oncology, Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital, (2) Specialist Out-patient Department, United Christian Hospital

Keywords:
Pre-chemotherapy patient education
Nurse-led program
XELOX
Pilot program

Introduction
Good pre-chemotherapy education can better prepare the patients for treatment and improve drug compliance. Although pre-treatment education is given to all the chemotherapy patients in our Department, specific care advice is not provided in a systematic way. There is also a lack of clear documentation to demonstrate its completeness and consistency. Therefore, a nurse-led pilot program on the XELOX scheme (a typical and common example of the combination of intravenous and oral chemotherapy) was conducted to pave the way for the reform of the current pre-chemotherapy education.

Objectives
It aimed to improve the program design of the pre-chemotherapy education for the XELOX patients, and evaluate its effectiveness.

Methodology
The pre-chemotherapy education program was revised by an evidence-based approach. With reference to the evidence found, an education checklist and a drug calendar for patients were designed. Education by face-to-face interview was set on Day 1 of Cycle 1 treatment, and followed by another interview on the day before Cycle 2 for education reinforcement. Moreover, phone follow-ups were scheduled on Day 3 and 10 of Cycle 1, which was the most crucial time for patient support. Effectiveness of the program was evaluated by patients’ compliance to the oral anticancer drug (capecitabine), their knowledge on the side-effect management, and the satisfaction level to the service. Patients’ compliance to capecitabine was measured by the drug
calendar and their self reports. For the latter two outcomes, they were measured by the self-constructed questionnaires, which were validated by three of the senior doctors and nurses in the Department.

**Result**
The pilot program was conducted from July to August 2014. Eleven eligible patients were enrolled with nine completed the program. Two patients dropped out as one died and one had their chemotherapy stopped prematurely. The overall adherence of oral anticancer drug was 100%. Patients could verbalize the correct timing and method of administration. Moreover, mean scores of their knowledge assessments in the two interviews were high (95.4% and 99.1% respectively). Six patients developed mild degree of side-effects with no interruption of treatment during the program. They all verbalized the correct strategies for the side-effect management. All the patients were satisfied with our service. In conclusion, this new program demonstrated the effectiveness in enhancing the treatment compliance and patients’ knowledge on side-effect management. It was also well received by the patients. Hence, it is warranted to expand to other chemotherapy schemes for the patient’s benefit.