



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
**Electronic Presentations**

**Convention ID:** 284

**Submitting author:** Mrs Wai Ming LEUNG

**Post title:** Advanced Practice Nurse, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, KCC

**Evaluating of Nursing Program for Anorexia Management in Advanced Cancer Patients**

*Leung WM(1), Leung WY Carenx (1), Liu CF(1), Ng MC Margaret(1), Wong KH(1)  
(1) Department of Clinical Oncology, Queen Elizabeth Hospital*

**Keywords:**

nursing program  
anorexia management  
advanced cancer patient

**Introduction**

Anorexia is the loss of appetite or the desire to eat. It is a common problem in advanced cancer patients, leading to the inability to consume optimal nutrition, with resultant weight loss and nutritional deficiency. Poor nutritional status can impair functional capability and contribute to a decreased quality of life. Since May 2013, anorexia nursing program has been launched in the Kowloon Central Cluster Queen Elizabeth Hospital Hospice Day Centre. In this programme, we employ a model of care enabling earlier identification, documentation and optimal management of the anorexia so as to improve patient symptom relief and quality of life. To optimize appropriate assessment and management of this cancer-related loss of appetite, a multidisciplinary clinical guidelines on management of anorexia was developed. Our nursing interventions are directed at the following aspects: Psychosocial support, Nutrition Education and Exercise Strategies. The anorexia nursing program includes an interactive group education on the causes and management of poor appetite. Practical tips, high energy recipes are introduced and provide demonstration of cooking. Nutrition education leaflet is issued to patients at the end of the program.

**Objectives**

To evaluate the effectiveness of the nursing program for management of anorexia in advanced cancer patients.

**Methodology**

Patients attending the KCC Hospice Day Center were invited to join the program if they had poor appetite and Palliative Performance Scale level of at least 60%. The Patient Generated Subjective Global Assessment is adopted for comprehensive assessment including patient's weight loss, changes in food intake, symptoms that are affecting food intake ... etc An individual interview or telephone follow up then conducted one week after the interactive education session, to reassess the symptom distress using the 10-point validated Edmonton Symptom Assessment Scale. Besides, the participants' acquired knowledge on managing of poor appetite was evaluated by a 5-question questionnaire. Number of correctly answered questions at baseline and

at the end of the talk was analyzed using Wilcoxon signed-rank Test. The change in poor appetite-related distress was evaluated by comparing the ESAS score before and after the program using Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

### **Result**

Forty patients joined the program between 22th May 2013 and 20th November 2013. The medium age was 72 years-old (range, 54-86 year-old), with male-to-female ratio of 1:1.3. Lung and colorectal cancers together constituted over half of all cases (62.5%). The mean numbers of correctly answered question at the start and at the end of the session are 0.53 (S.D.=1.2) and 4.08 (S.D.=1.23), respectively. There was a significant increase in the number of correctly answered question after the program as compared with baseline (p-value< 0.01). The mean baseline ESAS score was 4.39 (S.D. = 2.94) and the mean EASA score evaluated after the program was 3.03 (S.D. = 2.47). There was a significant reduction in ESAS score from at 1-week after the program as compared with baseline(p-value < 0.01). The result demonstrates that the nursing program for management of anorexia in advanced cancer patients is effective. Participants gained knowledge on anorexia management and there is significant improvement in anorexia-induced distress after the nursing program.