

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to assess the Quality Of Life (QOL) of Cervical Cancer patients who were registered at the National Cancer Institute Maharagama (NCIM). This was a descriptive, cross sectional study based in NCIM. It was carried out among the cervical cancer patients who attended NCIM from October 2005 to January 2006. Due to the limited resources and time constraints Sample of Convenience (non probability sample) was used. Sample size was 351 patients. A Questionnaire administered by an interviewer was the instrument for data collection. Collected data were analyzed by using SPSS.

The ages of all the participants in this study varied between 22 to 87 years. Their mean age was 56 years. From the sample of Cervical Cancer patients interviewed 53.3% resided in the Western Province (Colombo, Gampaha and Kalutara districts) and 54.4% lived in rural areas. Housewives consisted 81.2% of the patients and 62.7% belonged to families with a monthly income below Rs. 5000/=. Most of the (52.1%) of the patients in this study had first sexual intercourse before the age of 20 years. Within the study population only 10.8% had undergone the Pap smear test and among these patients 65.8% were diagnosed as in early stages (stage 0 and 1) of Cervical Cancer. This association is statistically significant. Counselling was NOT provided for 100% of the patients in the study.

This study reveals that the QOL in:

1. Sexual/vaginal functioning ability was poor in 92%, average in 8% of the participants.
2. Changes in perception were excellent in 46%, average in 44% and poor in 10% of the participants.
3. Symptoms due to Cervical Cancer and/or treatment were excellent in 58.4%, average in 41.3% and poor in 0.3% of the participants.
4. Symptoms due to Cancer and/or Treatment were average in 67%, excellent in 27% and poor in 6% of the participants.
5. Financial Difficulties was average in 55%, poor in 37% and excellent in 8% of the participants.
6. Functioning Ability is as follows:
 - * Physical Functioning Ability was average in 63%, excellent in 22% and poor in 15% of the participants.
 - * Role Functioning Ability was poor in 40% average in 35% and excellent in 25% of the participants.
 - * Emotional Functioning Ability was average in 51%, excellent in 29% and poor in 20% of the participants.
 - * Cognitive Functioning Ability was excellent in 51%, average in 36% and poor in 13% of the participants.
 - * Social Functioning ability was poor in 39%, average in 32% and excellent in 29% of the participants.
7. Complications due to Cervical Cancer and its treatment was average in 63%, excellent in 35% and poor in 2% of the participants.

According to the results of this study, following recommendations are made:

1. Well organized cervical cancer screening programme.
2. Counselling sessions for Cervical Cancer patients.