Management of COPD in primary health care
A study of a nurse-led multidisciplinary programme of pulmonary rehabilitation

av

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Akademisk avhandling

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Abstract


The aim of this thesis was to modify and evaluate effects, as well as to describe experiences of a nurse-led multidisciplinary programme of pulmonary rehabilitation in primary health care for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and their next of kin.

Interviews were performed with 12 COPD nurses about their experiences of patient education (I). Forty-nine patients participated in the intervention group and 54 in the control group in a quasi-experimental study which investigated the effects of the programme on functional capacity, quality of life and exacerbation frequency during one year (II). Interviews were performed related to the experiences of 20 patients who had participated in the six-week programme (III) and the experiences of 20 next of kin to the patients that had participated (IV).

The results showed that COPD nurses fluctuated between security and insecurity in patient education and were in need of support, time, structure and collaboration to develop their patient education (I). In Study II there were no differences between the groups with regard to functional capacity and quality of life, but the number of exacerbations decreased in the intervention group and increased in the control group (II). The patients in study III had allowed themselves to live at their own pace following the programme but a constant fear was present in spite of the programme (III). Next of kin in Study IV had a life that remained overshadowed by illness but there were positive outcomes of the programme as long as two years afterwards. The next of kin also had constant fear, however (IV).

In conclusion, the six week programme brought about results in changing everyday life. Nevertheless, all lived in the shadow of fear and uncertainty in spite of the programme. More research is needed to address the requirements of COPD nurses, patients and next of kin.

Keywords: COPD, exacerbations, experiences, functional capacity, next of kin, nursing care, primary care, quality of life.

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