CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

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The rate and factors associated with non-adherence to surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hormonal therapy among breast cancer patients attending public hospitals in Malaysia

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Abstract: Background: The role of breast cancer treatments in reducing recurrence and death has been established. However, the treatments side effects greatly impact on quality of life and little is known about the non-adherence rates. The purpose of this study was to determine the non-adherence rates to surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hormonal therapy, and factors that affect it in public hospitals in Malaysia. Methods: A multicentre cross-sectional study was conducted in six public hospitals involving all newly diagnosed breast cancer patients in 2012. Data were collected through medical record reviews and interview by using structured questionnaire. Non-adherence was categorized as any breast cancer patients refusing or discontinuing any treatment due to non-medical reasons. Univariable logistic regression and multiple logistic regressions were used for analysis. Results: A total of 340 breast cancer patients were included in the study. The proportion for non-adherence to surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hormonal therapy were 14%, 30.1%, 33.3% and 36.3% respectively. Factors associated with non-adherence to surgery were localities involving Kuala Lumpur (2) (OR: 3.41), Johor (OR: 8.38) and Kelantan (OR: 6.32), and those required mastectomy (OR: 5.66). No factors were found to be associated with non-adherence to chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hormonal therapy. These three treatment modalities were then combined as oncology therapy and the only independent factor associated with non-adherence to oncology therapy was Perak locality (OR: 1.42). Conclusion: Non-adherence to breast cancer treatments was high among breast cancer patients at public hospitals in Malaysia. Factors influencing non-adherence were locations and mastectomy implicating of socio-culture, body image issues, psychological disturbance and treatment navigation. Community educational programs focusing on correcting misconceptions, treatment outcomes and treatments’ side effects would reduce non-adherence and improve the quality of breast cancer care in Malaysia. NMRR ID: NMRR-12-910-10919.

Keywords: breast cancer; therapy; non-adherence


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