MUSIC THERAPY AS A TOOL OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN ADOLESCENCE CANCER PATIENTS

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Aim: Adolescents cancer patients not only have substantial physical, cognitive, emotional and interpersonal problems but also added burden of a life threatening disease. Persistent body image concerns somatic preoccupation, disruptions in heterosexual relationships and deficit in social competence have all been documented in this age group. Integration of conventional and complementary modes of therapy can be helpful in case of psychological problems. This study examines adolescent cancer patients and their parents perspectives about music and music therapy’s role in their lives.

Methods: We assessed 100 patients in their adolescence with their families in the Psycho oncology department of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Cancer Research Institute during July 2006 to December 2013. Among total patients 42% were ALL, 12% were NHL, 6% were Hodgkin disease, 12% were Rhabdomyosarcoma, 8% were PNET, 8% were Germ cell Tumor, 4% were brain tumor, 4% were Osteosarcoma and rest 4% were soft tissue and other patients. We examined their family functioning, mental health, self-esteem, and social competence. Music sessions for individuals and groups based on their needs and tastes were designed. The patients could listen music of their choice, play instruments themselves, writes songs or simply talk about music they liked.

Results: Out of 100 patients 80% had excellent psychological functioning without serious social issues. They expressed a positive effect. Among them 10% expressed a little depression, 8% of the teenagers thought that their families were less attentive than the case with their counterparts. These adolescents were maladjusted to the society also. Two patients (2%) were reluctant to command. Majority of the patients who had psychological disturbances, responded well to Music therapy and agreed to proceed with their treatment except a few terminal cases. Positive effects may carry over into children’s home lives and vicariously support families. Out of 28 patients psychologically challenged adolescents, 18 patients came back to normal state of mind after music therapy.

Conclusions: Hence we recommend psychotherapy strongly in their adolescent period in frequent intervals. Music therapy can be excellent tool for psychotherapy in the adolescent paediatric and cure strongly recommended.

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