

Abstract

Communication influences patient disclosure, treatment adherence, and outcome, adaptation to illness, and bereavement. Different cancer patients and caregivers communicate their various experiences in unique ways. These distinctive experiences are necessary to be told, because it empowers both the teller and everyone who hears and shares that experience. However, there is little research documenting the experiences of cervical cancer patients and caregivers in Kenya and the rest of Africa. This study therefore sought to assess the communication experience among cervical cancer patients and their caregivers. This study was a qualitative study employing the phenomenological method to obtain data from cervical patients and caregivers. It was carried out in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, where a range of in-depth interviews were held with eight patients and eight caregivers purposively sampled. Data from the interviews were analysed thematically and presented in narrative form using paraphrases and quotations. Ethical issues such as informed consent, confidentiality and official authorisation were observed at all levels. To enrich this study, hermeneutic theory, which explains more about the individual's experience, was used. The findings of the study indicated that communication is therapeutic, although most of the patients and the caregivers were reluctant to talk about their illness. The findings of this study will be of interest to scholars, policy-makers and caregivers of terminally ill patients.