

Social Support in Childhood Cancer Care: The Experiences of Parents of Children Diagnosed with Cancer Living in Kashmir Valley

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Abstract—Cancer is a leading cause of death for children worldwide. Though the outcome of childhood cancer care research has shown significant developments in the cure and survival rates in developed countries. But the same is not true with the low and middle-income countries where the cure and survival rates are not still promising thus making the situation worse for the caregivers. Parents and families as the primary caregivers face extreme challenges while negotiating between various issues arising out of childhood cancers. During the phases of a child's cancer care, the caregivers have to negotiate between the multiple tasks. A child's cancer diagnosis and the treatment phases force the caregivers to be in new and challenging roles. Disruption in family life, child's cancer care and the costs incurred on treatment amid lack of adequate financial resources are the visible markers of distress among the families of children diagnosed with cancer. Availability of proper social support system in the hour of crises can significantly make a difference. This research study which is qualitative in nature has been conducted in the valley's tertiary care hospital namely Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of medical sciences (SKIMS), Soura, Srinagar. This paper is an attempt to draw insights from the experiences of parents of children diagnosed with cancer living in the Kashmir valley.

Keywords: Cancer, Children, Experience, Parents, Social Support.