Evaluation of a case management program for women with breast cancer: Conducting a quasi-experimental study within mental health care research

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Introduction

Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers in the world. In Germany, more than 55,000 women are affected by it every year. Patients are not only confronted with a life threatening disease but are also forced to deal with often very invasive medical treatment and cancer-related physical, mental and social burden. In this context, many patients express substantial need for more information and support (Kaufmann and Ernst, 2000). As the treatment of breast cancer is a system-wide, complex, multi-professional and interdisciplinary process, the original Anglo-American concept of Case Management (CM) may represent a suitable method to support the integration of medical treatment processes and resulting increase in effectiveness and efficiency. Case Management is defined as a comprehensive, patient-oriented and integrated (trans-sectorial) organisation and coordination of treatment and medical care processes through one central contact person, the Case Manager.

In order to improve breast cancer treatment, a pilot model of the CM concept has been implemented at the "mammaNetz" service centre in Augsburg (Bavaria) as a first institution of this kind in Germany.

Methods and Work Steps II

Study Design

Collection of Case Manager patients from mammaNetz, Augsburg (standard care) and control group (patients with breast cancer: Conducting a quasi-experimental study within mental health care research)

Methods and Work Steps I

Based on methods of Mental Health Care Research, a prospective quasi-experimental multicentre study started in November 2006 and will be completed in October 2009 to evaluate the pilot project based on Case Management. Treatment process and outcome of the intervention group (Case Management patients from mammaNetz, Augsburg) and the control group (patients from eastern Bavaria with standard care, i.e. without CM) are compared at baseline (t0), after six (t1) and after twelve months (t2). Focus of the study is the investigation of effectiveness and efficiency. This is operationalised by analysing both patient’s perspective using standardised questionnaires and – with regard to efficiency – administrative data.

Subject Matter and Aim of the Research Project

The aim of the study (founded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, BMBF) is to investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of a Case Management Concept for patients with breast cancer.

Casestatistics of participating women who met the inclusion criteria

Discussion

Objective

1. Study region Augsburg
2. Study region Deggendorf

First Baseline Results (n=106)

Table 1: Outcome and instruments used for investigation

Table 2: Demographic and clinical characteristics of the participants at baseline (n=106)

Figure 1: Sample size and assignment of patients to treatment arms intervention group CM: patients supported by Case Management more than three times, RV1 (control group Deggendorf), RV2 (standard care Augsburg and BR (patients with ≤ 3 contacts to the Case Manager).

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