

The Family Living with Incurable Prostate Cancer – A Qualitative Study

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Introduction

Prostate cancer accounted for 12% of all diagnosed cancers in Denmark during the period 1996-2000. The disease can be characterized as a chronic illness with a significant impact on both the patient and his family. Research in this field to date has predominantly focused on the man's experiences in coping with the disease while research concentrating on the family's experiences following the husband's/father's cancer diagnosis is lacking. The focus of this study is to analyze the daily experiences, shared through narratives, of family members with a husband/father suffering from prostate cancer.

Aim

The aim of the study is to investigate the daily life experiences of families following the husband's/father's prostate cancer diagnosis.



Prostate cancer is a social crisis, that can alter elements of the family system (1)

Histologic image of prostate cancer

References

1 Arrington MI. "She's right behind me all the way": an analysis of prostate cancer narratives and changes in family relationships. *Journal of Family Communication* 2005; 5(2): 141-62.

Material and method

The study assumes a phenomenological-hermeneutic approach, using Ricoeur's theories on narratives and text interpretation. The informants: Spouses, daughters and sons of men diagnosed with incurable prostate cancer and referred to The Urological department of Hospital Littlebelt, Fredericia, for treatment. Six families (two to three members per family) (n=18) participate in this qualitative interview study. Informants are interviewed two months after the husband/father is informed of his cancer diagnosis, and again after ten months (Fig. 1). The interview guide contains open-ended questions that, for example, pinpoint the children's thoughts and actions during their father's illness. Data analysis is done in three stages, namely a naïve reading, followed by a more structured analysis, and concludes with critical interpretation and discussion (Fig. 2).

Results

Data collection started mid-September 2007. Data analysis is ongoing, and the first results are expected to be available in 2009. The study are expected to provide the clinical nurse with critical knowledge to support families with chronically ill members.

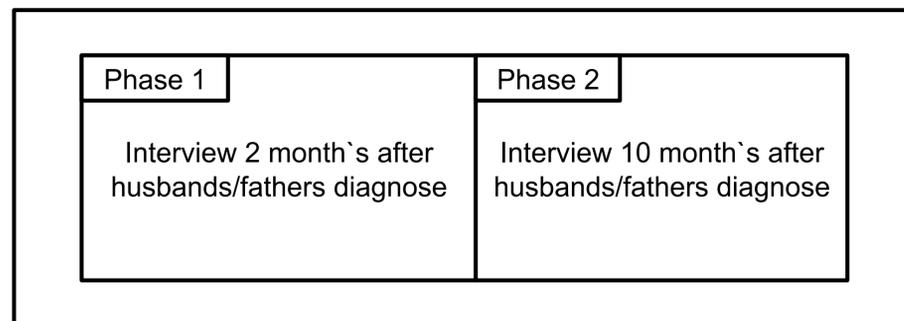


Figure 1. Collection of the Imperical Material

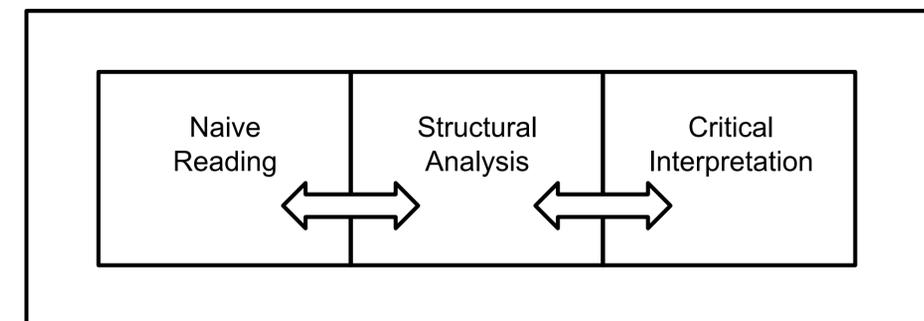


Figure 2. The Analysis in Three Stages after Ricoeur