



Family Support in Caring for Cancer Patients During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 Pandemic period has a major impact on life, especially causing psychological problems for sensitive groups, namely the elderly and people who have chronic diseases such as cancer. Fear of infection, more severe complications, delays in diagnostics, treatment, and survival care put additional stress on cancer-affected patients. This raises concern for cancer patients that require support from various parties, especially families. Knowing the search for family support literature in treating cancer patients during the pandemic. Search articles using four databases: Ebsco, Proquest, PubMed, Science Director published from 2019 to 2021 with the keywords Family support, Cancer, Covid 19, Qualitative research. Search results from 4 databases found 391 articles of relevance to the topic, after article duplication and screening were carried out there were 20 articles entered at the full text review stage and eligibility based on inclusion and exclusion criteria so that 7 articles were obtained to be reviewed. The results of the study show that from 7 literatures it was found that there are several themes that influence families in providing support to cancer patients including socio-demography, health systems, public health, political and socio-cultural factors that can affect the level and trajectory of resilience, distress, and unmet needs in cancer patients during COVID-19. The need for support from various sources, especially families to strengthen the positive coping of cancer patients during the pandemic, both from the nuclear family, extended family, and other social support

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ABSTRAK

Masa Pandemi COVID-19 berdampak besar bagi kehidupan, terutama menimbulkan masalah psikologis bagi kelompok sensitif yaitu lansia dan orang yang memiliki penyakit kronis seperti kanker. Ketakutan akan infeksi, komplikasi yang lebih parah, keterlambatan dalam diagnosis, pengobatan, dan perawatan kelangsungan hidup memberikan tekanan tambahan pada pasien yang terkena kanker. Hal ini menimbulkan keprihatinan bagi penderita kanker yang membutuhkan dukungan dari berbagai pihak terutama keluarga. Mengetahui penelusuran literatur dukungan keluarga dalam merawat pasien kanker di masa pandemi. Cari artikel menggunakan empat database: Ebsco, Proquest, PubMed, Science Director terbitan 2019 hingga 2021 dengan kata kunci Family support, Cancer, Covid 19, Qualitative research. Hasil pencarian dari 4 database ditemukan 391 artikel relevan dengan topik, setelah dilakukan duplikasi artikel dan penyaringan terdapat 20 artikel yang masuk pada tahap full text review dan kelayakan berdasarkan kriteria inklusi dan eksklusi sehingga didapatkan 7 artikel untuk direview. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dari 7 literatur ditemukan beberapa tema yang mempengaruhi keluarga dalam memberikan dukungan kepada pasien kanker diantaranya faktor sosial demografi, sistem kesehatan, kesehatan masyarakat, politik dan

sosial budaya yang dapat mempengaruhi tingkat dan lintasan ketahanan, kesusahan, dan kebutuhan yang tidak terpenuhi pada pasien kanker selama COVID-19. Perlunya dukungan dari berbagai sumber terutama keluarga untuk memperkuat coping positif pasien kanker di masa pandemi, baik dari keluarga inti, keluarga besar, maupun dukungan sosial lainnya.

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INTRODUCTION

Cancer is a non-communicable disease that has the second highest mortality rate in the world after cardiovascular. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that almost 10 million deaths due to cancer, and the most common in 2020 in terms of new cancer cases is breast cancer with 2.26 million deaths[1]. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Health, cancer has complex problems in addition to physical problems, patients are also faced with psychological response problems that also require special treatment[2].

WHO has declared Covid 19 a global pandemic. The Corona virus can infect anyone, but some groups have a higher risk level for getting the Corona Virus, namely the elderly and people who have chronic diseases such as cancer [3]. This can happen because the corona virus attacks people whose immune systems are low, especially people under and over age. When the immune system response is low, weak, or damaged, it becomes an open invitation to infections such as the coronavirus or other diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, or cancer [4].

Cancer is a disease with complex problems. In addition to physical problems, patients are also faced with psychological response problems that also require special treatment. Then the presence of covid adds a new problem for cancer sufferers. Having complex problems in addition to physical problems, patients are also faced with psychological response problems that also require special treatment. Then the presence of covid adds a new problem for cancer sufferers [5].

During this time of pandemic perceived higher risk of infection, fear of infection, and more severe complications compared to healthy controls, delays in the path of diagnostics, treatment, and survival care always create additional stress for people with cancer [7]. This raises concern for cancer patients, for that it is necessary to have support from various sources to strengthen positive coping for cancer patients[8].

One strategy that can be done to reduce the burden of emotional problems faced by cancer patients is to focus on focusing closer to calm the mind, through support from various parties, especially families[2]. Family is the most important strength for cancer patients. In addition to the nuclear family, there is support from a large family so that it

becomes an important source of support and resilience for cancer patients[9]. Therefore, it is necessary to review literature on family support in cancer patients. Assessment of the needs of cancer patients is very important, a treatment setting that focuses on quality of life, pain control, and one's social, emotional, and spiritual needs of cancer patients. The need for family support needs to be addressed by providing optimal holistic services.

METHOD

This research data is in the form of a literature review, taking this data from the results of previous studies. A comprehensive and relevant database search technique uses a systematic approach and selection process. The sources of the literature are traced from national and international databases, including: PubMed, ProQuest, Science Direct and Ebsco. The selection of articles in this literature begins with determining the keywords "Family support, Cancer, Covid 19, Qualitative research". Then the findings were summarized and reported using the prism diagram protocol for Scoping Review.

All articles were screened and analyzed for inclusion or exclusion based on quality and relevance to the review topic review, objectives, and review topic questions. To help group the found articles, the researcher used bibliographic software in the form of endnote to organize the article findings by creating folders and named them according to the search results of the searched database. Articles that have been collected based on 4 databases with search results (n = 391) articles are then completed by checking duplication, the results of duplication checking are as many as (n = 4) articles, so the articles that will be completed in the next stage are (n = 387) articles, then the article is completed based on excluded data based on the title and abstract, the results are obtained that the excluded articles based on the population (non-cancer patients) were (n=60) articles, based on the protocol as many as (n=9) articles, based on reviews of (n=41) articles and topics (topics with the covid pandemic that are not related to cancer) (n=257) articles, obtained as many as (n=) articles. After collecting as many as (n = 7) articles and then doing it by completing the data based on the full text (content of the article), exclude was obtained.

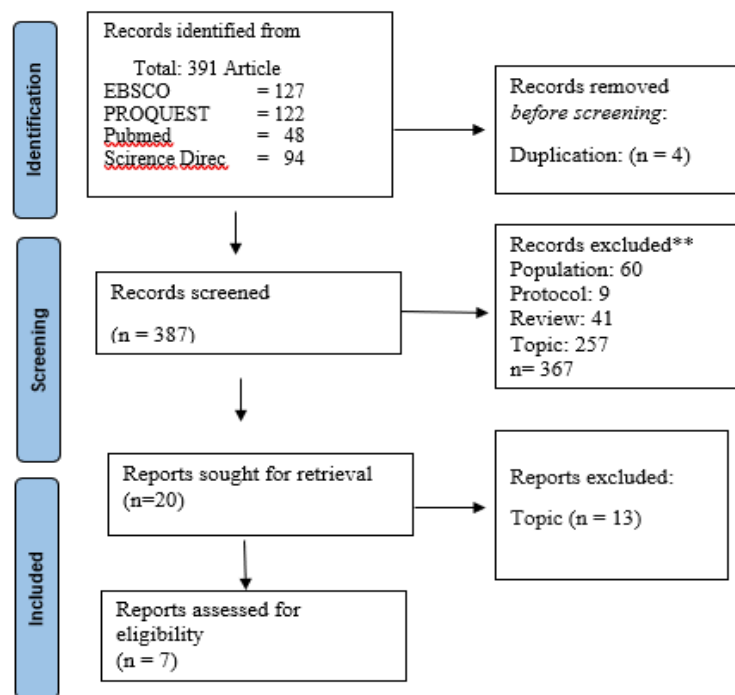


Chart 1. The Process of Reviewing and Analyzing the Articles using PRISMA Diagram

RESULTS

Author	Design	Research Results
[10]	Longitudinal descriptive qualitative study.	Cancer patients' perceptions and experiences during the pandemic regarding treatment and support management: Participants felt that COVID-19 had disrupted centrality in care. Participants described the balance between being careful of infection and maintaining safety through prevention and protection strategies.
[8]	Quantitative descriptive analysis and qualitative thematic content analysis.	Concerns and fears of parents about the vulnerability of their children with cancer to be infected with Covid-19, the management of cancer care is less than optimal due to hospitals as Covid treatments, this anxiety has a psychological, social and economic impact from isolation.
[11]	Mixed methods descriptive approach	The five themes found were psychological stress, fear of viral susceptibility, interference with cancer treatment, lack of information, and concerns of cancer caregivers.
[12]	Descriptive Qualitative	Research shows that mothers of children with leukemia faces several challenges and stressors that affect their ability to cope with difficult situations. The four main themes reflect the various challenges that parents and children with cancer face during the COVID-19 pandemic: children who refuse to wear masks, social isolation, relationships family and financial problems. It happened that 60% of children refused to wear PPE, especially face masks, citing discomfort, restriction of movement and feeling different from their peers.
[13]	Descriptive analysis of quantitative survey data	The results of the descriptive quantitative data survey found several main themes. (683 cancer patients and survivors, 169 caregivers, 150 health workers stated the impact of disruption to cancer services: 1. Experience of cancer services and treatment disorders 2. Quality of clinical care during the pandemic 3. Use of telehealth, and 4. Supporting caregivers and family members in cancer care during the pandemic
[14]	Descriptive, phenomenological approach	The results of data analysis get three main themes, namely Problems: Anxiety and fear, social isolation, physical hardship, and economic hardship. Protection: Reduced stigmatization, preventive measures, increased communication between family members, and social distancing. Countermeasures: spirituality, positive thinking, social support, and hobbies.
[9]	The researcher did not explain the research method, but gave information that the interviewer was structured	The results of the analysis found five themes: extended family members as a source of support; the presence of sadness, anger; empathy for extended family members; and relationships after treatment. Extended family members can provide support valuable for parents of a child with cancer.

The results showed that from seven literatures it was found that changes in the care of cancer patients during the COVID-19 pandemic were found, including a limited understanding of how the experience of care for chronic conditions in order to fight the changing landscape of COVID-19, and psychosocial impacts include: concerns about exposure to the corona virus in family members with cancer. Besides that uncertainty about deteriorating global conditions resulting in prolonged delay in diagnosis and treatment can cause cancer to metastasize to an advanced stage and can add to patient concern. So that families can provide support to patients.

The results of this literature are in line with research conducted by [14] who stated that the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic has not only been stressful for everyone but has also caused psychological problems in a sensitive group of cancer patients. Cancer patients have a 3.5 times higher risk of death in cancer patients who contracted COVID-19 due to decreased immunity. Prevention related to social isolation taken during the pandemic has a negative impact on recovery from cancer.

DISCUSSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major emotional impact on cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers [11]. The lack of clear guidelines on cancer care, as well as the economic and social impact of the pandemic further worsens mental health in patients with chronic diseases including cancer [11]. These problems cause fear of disease conditions, and uncertainty of care and treatment due to Covid-19 [5]. Uncertainty about how to continue treatment, limited visitation schedules, changes in operating schedules and availability of hospital resources [11]. In addition to the changes that occur in cancer patients during this pandemic, there are also factors that influence families in providing support to cancer patients including socio-demography, health systems, political, socio-cultural factors, which can influence the rate and trajectory of cancer patients. Resilience, distress and unmet needs among people affected by cancer during COVID-19 [10].

The results of other research conducted by [11] explain that stress related to delays in normal recovery during a pandemic, difficulty coping with uncertainty, and limited support can lead to depression [10]. Enhanced psychological support: the emotional challenges this pandemic poses for cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers of cancer patients [11]. This is in line with other studies which state that individual and family dynamics influence how families respond to crisis including cancer with the support of their extended family network so that they can continue to function as Grandparents, aunts and uncles of children with cancer can be an important source of support and resilience for cancer patients [9].

Oncology care evaluates psychosocial difficulties and access to care services in cancer patients during a pandemic [10]. Efforts are needed to further integrate psychosocial support and the critical role of caregivers into the evolving pandemic response measures to guide the oncology service system during this pandemic [11]. Therefore, it is necessary to develop online digital devices such as telehealth or telemedicine during the pandemic as an alternative in accessing health services so as to reduce the risk of cancer

patients. [13]. To reduce psychosocial problems and increase patient confidence about treatment, behavioral therapy and awareness raising are needed [14]. In addition, the challenge for nurses is to change public opinion and negative perceptions to reduce the stigmatization of cancer patients. [11] It is imperative to offer professional nursing support to strengthen coping with stressful situations caused by cancer diagnosis and treatment [11].

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This review has some limitations. We wanted to focus the problem on one type of cancer but it was limited in obtaining articles. So we take the topic on cancer in general

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of a literature review it can be concluded that the perception of cancer patients and survivors are that they have considerable anxiety related to their perceived susceptibility to COVID-19, major disruptions to care and treatment, uncertainty, regarding continuation of treatment, postponement of scheduled surgeries, and availability of resources. hospital. So it is necessary to have support from various sources to strengthen the positive coping of cancer patients. For families there are concerns about the lack of ability to provide emotional support, individual and family dynamics affect how families respond to crises including cancer with the support of their extended family network in order to continue to be an important source of support and resilience for cancer patients. for that it is necessary to have support from various sources to strengthen positive coping for cancer patients from nuclear families, extended families, and other social support.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares that there is no conflict with other parties related to this research.

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