

Prior knowledge, acceptance, adaptation, and challenges following stoma formation among colorectal cancer patients in northern peninsular of Malaysia: A qualitative study

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Stoma formation affects an individual in various ways, including physical, emotional, social, and cognitive functions. Diverse studies report ways of an individual living with new stoma formation, however, the comprehensive understanding of the entire process, which includes knowledge before the surgical procedure, as well as the subsequent acceptance, adaptation, and challenges to living with a stoma is lacking. **Methods:** An in-depth interview session was conducted with 12 colorectal cancer patients who have undergone surgical procedures for intestinal stoma formation. The patterns and themes within the data were identified by thematic analysis, involving data familiarisation and coding followed by themes' generation and refinement. **Results:** Four themes and 9 subthemes were identified, which revealed the sufficiency of stoma-related information and understanding before surgery as well as positive acceptance of self and family members reflected through their reactions and support. Nonetheless, the challenges are anticipated which highlights the complications of the stoma itself, obstacles surrounding social life, and financial burdens. **Conclusion:** This study provides valuable insights into the experiences of individuals living with a stoma following colorectal cancer surgery. The identified themes and subthemes highlight the need to address social stigma as well as financial issues to alleviate the burden of stoma-related expenses. Increasing public awareness and improving financial assistance could be a measure to enhance the overall quality of life for individuals living with a stoma.