

String of PEARLS

Practical Evidence About Real Life Situations

about cancer

PEARLS are succinct summaries of Cochrane Systematic Reviews for primary care practitioners—developed by Prof. Brian McAvoy for the Cochrane Primary Care Field (www.cochraneprimarycare.org), New Zealand Branch of the Australasian Cochrane Centre at the Department of General Practice and Primary Health Care, University of Auckland (www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa), funded by the Ministry of Health (www.health.govt.nz), and published in NZ Doctor (www.nzdoctor.co.nz).

- Interventions effective for preventing oral mucositis in patients with cancer
- Postoperative radiotherapy effective for ductal carcinoma in situ of the breast
- Chemoradiotherapy effective for cervical cancer
- Chemotherapy improves survival in mouth and throat cancer
- Multidisciplinary interventions can enhance return-to-work for cancer patients
- Insufficient evidence for selenium preventing cancer
- Music interventions may benefit cancer patients

DISCLAIMER: PEARLS are for educational use only and are not meant to guide clinical activity, nor are they a clinical guideline.



Personalised care planning is beneficial for some long-term conditions

Megan Arroll PhD, FHEA, CPsychol, CSci, AFBPS; Research Fellow, Chronic Illness Research Team, University of East London, Stratford Campus, Water Lane, London, E15 4LZ, United Kingdom; Email: m.a.arroll@sa.uel.ac.uk

THE PROBLEM: Long-term conditions, whether physical or psychological, pose a substantial burden to our health care services. Personalised care planning is a collaborative approach that is proactive and anticipatory, in which the clinician and patient explore the problems associated with long-term conditions (practical, social, and emotional), care options and patient preferences, before agreeing an action plan to achieve desired goals. The focus here is not only clinical tests and treatment, but also education, self-management strategies for dealing with stress, problem-solving practical issues and modifying health-related behaviours. Increasing evidence has shown that patients who are more 'activated', that is, possess the knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation to manage their health, have better outcomes¹ and reduced health care costs.²

CLINICAL BOTTOM LINE: Although the quality of evidence in this review was moderate, patient care planning offers promise for those with long-term conditions. The best outcomes were found when the process included preparation, record-sharing, care coordination and review, intensive support from health care professionals and integration into routine care.

Patient care planning for long-term conditions

	Success	Evidence	Harms
Physical health	Improvements in blood glucose levels, lower blood pressure in patients with diabetes, and better control of asthma	Cochrane review ³	No evidence of harms
Psychological health	Reduced symptoms of depression		

References

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