Pain Intensity and Pain Management of Hospitalized Patients With Cancer: An Opportunity for Improvement

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About 73% of patients diagnosed with cancer report poor pain management. The purpose of this study was to evaluate pain intensity and the extent to which pain was controlled, and based on the findings, to pose options for improving pain management for hospitalized patients with cancer.

Background

The International Association of the Study of Pain (2012) defined pain as an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage. Cancer pain can be a complex symptom to manage because several different types of pain often are occurring simultaneously. Guidelines from the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (2012) suggest that cancer pain should be classified by pain associated with tumor, pain associated with treatment, and/or pain unrelated. Cancer pain also can be acute or chronic and management options differ depending on the type of pain.

Methods

Inpatients, who were aged 17 years or older, were invited to participate in the project conducted at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center, a 120-bed academic medical center in the midwestern United States. Participants were English-speaking men or women with any cancer diagnosis and stage.