

A Qualitative Analysis

Exploring Themes That Affect Unease In The Radiotherapy Treatment Room – A Modesty Survey From Diverse Communities And Cohorts.

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Background

- Cancer patients undergoing radiotherapy (RT) usually need to expose some part of their body for treatment.
- Little is known about patient unease during RT especially within a multicultural population.

Aim

To assess patient experiences of RT within the treatment room (TR).

Methods

312 patients receiving thoracic or pelvic RT were surveyed:

- August - November 2023
- 4 RT treatment centres in SWSLHD and WSLHD

This abstract focuses on free text responses to the question:

“Is there anything else you want to tell us about your experience inside the treatment room?”

Summative Content Analysis methodology of Hsieh and Shannon¹ was used for analysis.

Results

145 free text responses to the specific question listed above (Refer to Table 1 for demographic breakdown).

Figure 1 displays the thematic map, showing 3 main themes:

1. Staff,
2. Education (informed about the need to undress)
3. Environment (included procedures and equipment).

- Staff sub-themes of kindness (80 counts) and professionalism (50 counts) were most prevalent.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

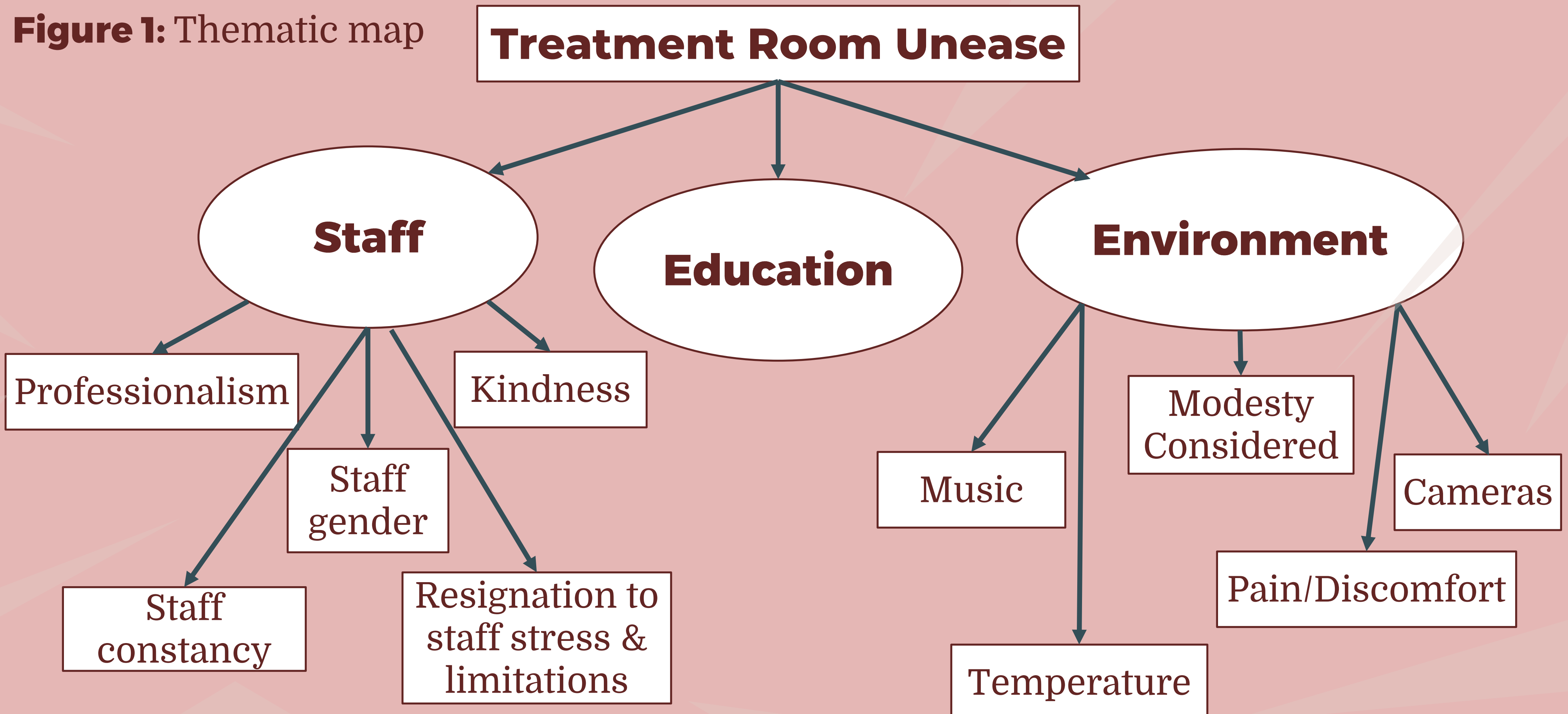
	n	%
Gender	Female	108 74%
	Male	37 26%
Treatment Area	Thorax	102 70%
	Pelvis	43 30%
Survey Language	English	143 99%
	Arabic	1 1%
Treating Centre	Vietnamese	1 1%
	Centre A	31 21%
	Centre B	45 31%
	Centre C	37 26%
Ancestry	Centre D	32 22%
	Included Australia	79 54%
Country of Birth	Did not include Australia	66 46%
	Australia	85 59%
Speak a Language other than English at home	Overseas	54 37%
	Not Answered	6 4%
Speak a Language other than English at home	Yes	45 31%
	No	97 67%
	No response	3 2%

Conclusion

Staff kindness and professionalism influences patient unease in the RT treatment room.

Many themes identify factors that could be modified to reduce patient unease during RT.

Figure 1: Thematic map



“All staff are friendly and you feel comfortable at all times” (A-004)

“The staff are very lovely and always greeted and introduced themselves which makes you feel comfortable” (D-006)

“I felt hurried ... I felt the staff were emotionally detached from me ... One staff member almost sprinted ahead of me down the corridor” (B-003)

“...a mix of genders...I initially found it more intimidating but the staff have been so nice and caring” (C-004)

“I would prefer for the same people every time, less embarrassing” (C-040)

“It would be nice to have a little more interaction with the treating staff. I understand they however have a schedule and patience [sic] to see” (B-033)

“They explained what the procedures were ...and I felt comfortable in the treatment room” A-018

“I don’t like lying uncovered for long” (D-022)

“It would be nice if the use of cameras was explained. Is this being recorded?” (D-066)

“The warm towels provided helps immensely with the cooler room temperatures” (B-008)

Reference

Hsieh, H-F and Shannon, SE, *Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis*. Qualitative Health Research, 2005. 15(9): p. 1277-1288. DOI: 10.1177/1049732305276687.

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