Perspectives of Stakeholders in Pursuing Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) in Children and Adolescents: An Integrative Review

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Aims: 1) evaluate current literature on stakeholders’ perspectives on deciding to pursue HSCT in children and adolescents 2) provide insight into gaps within the literature and recommend future research on this topic

Background

- HSCT is a treatment option utilized for children and adolescents with malignant and nonmalignant diseases
- Anxiety, uncertainty, and hope are commonly observed in those faced with this treatment decision

Methods

- Integrative review
- Sixteen articles met inclusion and exclusion criteria (Figure 1)
- Compared articles based on disease type, stakeholder (patient, parent and/or guardian, provider), and study methodology
- Donors were not included as stakeholders in this review, as the aim was on those making the decision to proceed with HSCT

Results

Comparison by disease type:
- Those pursuing HSCT for a malignant disease often feel there is no choice, as HSCT is their only hope
- Multiple factors are considered to influence one’s decision to pursue HSCT, including HSCT risk, trust in medical team, current disease status, and a variety of psychosocial factors

Comparison by stakeholder:
- The factors influencing one’s disease were inconsistent among studies and stakeholders
- QOL affects the decision to pursue HSCT, but the extent is unclear
- According to patients and family members, physician input is influential in the decision-making process of pursuing HSCT, but physician input in the process is unclear

Comparison by study methodology:
- The decision-making process for pursuing HSCT in actual decision-making experiences is unclear, majority were hypothetical or past reports
- No experimental or intervention study exists on this topic
- Half of the studies were qualitative and half quantitative

Conclusions

- Additional research is necessary to better understand factors affecting the decision to pursue HSCT in children and adolescents
- Experimental studies are essential to guide future decisional support and educational intervention in this population, along with advancing objective teaching tools
- Inclusion of physician perspectives and exploration of decision-making experiences in an actual versus hypothetical or past reports are also necessary in future studies

References