



The Necessity of Analysis of Cancer Survivor Concept in Korea

Jiyoung Kim

Department of Nursing, Dongeui University, 176 Eomgwangro, Busanjin-gu, Busan 47340, Republic of Korea

Article Details

Article Type: Commentary Article

Received date: 24th August, 2017

Accepted date: 13th December, 2017

Published date: 28th December, 2017

***Corresponding Author:** Jiyoung Kim, Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing, Dongeui University, 176 Eomgwangro, Busanjin-gu, Busan 47340, Republic of Korea. E-mail: [jy1223kim@deu.ac.kr](mailto: jy1223kim@deu.ac.kr)

Citation: Kim H (2017) The necessity of analysis of cancer survivor concept in Korea. J Comp Nurs Res Care 2: 120. doi: <https://doi.org/10.33790/jcnrc1100120>.

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The 5-year survival rate of cancer in Korea as of 2010-2014 was 70.3%, which was 29.1% higher than that of 1993-1995 [1]. Although the international comparison of cancer survival rates is limited due to the difference in estimated periods for each country, the survival rate of Korea is higher than that of United States cancer survival rate (69.0%) in 2006-2012 [1]. As the cancer survival rate improves, it is important to discuss their physical and mental health problems.

However, there is no definite definition of cancer survivors in Korea [2, 3]. In terms of policy, cancer survivors was defined as surviving for more than 5 years without recurrence or metastasis after treatment. Mullan [4] is the first to use the concept of cancer survivor, and has developed an acute survival stage (less than 2 years of cancer diagnosis), extended survival stage (2 to 5 years), and lasting survival stage (> 5 years) with the risk of secondary cancer. Feuerstein [5] is unclear on the outcome and duration of treatment at the time of diagnosis after cancer diagnosis, only cancer patients who have completed primary treatment are defined as cancer survivors. In the United States, cancer survivors were defined as from immediately after cancer diagnosis, reflecting the accelerated rate of cancer survival [6]. In addition, the diagnosis of cancer affects not only the patients but also the people around them, such as anxiety due to cancer, fear of death, and burden of medical treatment [6]. Therefore, National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship [6] proposed a comprehensive concept that includes family, friends, and caregivers. This suggests that caregivers and patients need to discuss long-term progress and medical expenses after the diagnosis of cancer, and the caregivers need the attention of medical staff as well.

Thus, cancer survivors are interested in care and are becoming an important field of academia. The concept of cancer survivors is defined somewhat differently in each study in Korea, and previous studies [7, 8] have defined cancer survivors as those who have been diagnosed with cancer for a year or two years after diagnosis. Although the cancer survivorship is defined as obtaining well-being by providing cancer survival nursing from cancer diagnosis [9]. However, attempts to clearly define the concept of the target person are insufficient. Therefore future research should identify and define the characteristics of the cancer survivor concept appropriate to the domestic situation and contribute to the application of clinical nursing practice and research.

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