

Strong Through Knowledge

DKFZ's Cancer Information Service (KID) shows that evidence-based cancer information promotes patients' self-competence

The Cancer Information Service (KID) of the German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ), as a National Reference Center for Cancer Information, advances public health competence in Germany. "Making decisions despite uncertainties" is the theme of the 14th Annual Conference of the German Network for Evidence Based Medicine (Deutsches Netzwerk Evidenzbasierte Medizin, DNEbM) on March 15 and 15 in Berlin, where the Cancer Information Service will report first results of a survey among users of the telephone cancer information service. The service reaches out to patients, family members and health professionals. As a DNEbM sustaining member, the Cancer Information Service helps to disseminate and advance concepts and methods of evidence-based medicine (EBM) in healthcare.

"Health professionals, patients and the interested public benefit from the excellent quality of our cancer information, which is unique in Germany. The service bundles scientifically founded information and communicates it in a comprehensible way, tailored to the individual needs of those seeking advice. Our special value is that all information provided is evidence-based and free of any trends or individual expert opinions. And it has no commercial aims whatsoever," says Dr. Susanne Weg-Remers, director of the Cancer Information Service.

An important prerequisite for well-founded decisions is to have scientifically founded information. The Cancer Information Service offers such information via telephone, e-mail and the Internet. With its neutral and evidence-based quality of information, the Cancer Information Service supports the goals of the German Network for Evidence Based Medicine: providing public healthcare based on best scientific knowledge. The Cancer Information Service is thus making an important contribution to public health policy. Weg-Remers continued that although trends may give an impetus in decision-making, when it comes to cancer and its treatment they fail to meet the standards defined by the DNEbM in its "Good Practice in Health Information" (Gute Praxis Gesundheitsinformation, GPGI) guidelines, which aim to assure quality of health information and to protect the public from unreliable, biased and misleading health information. "This also includes naming uncertainties in the absence of evidence-based knowledge," Weg-Remers adds.

Information provided by the Cancer Information Service promotes self-competence

A non-representative survey conducted among callers of the Cancer Information Service shows that interest in obtaining information is very strong (87 percent of callers wish to learn as much as possible about their disease). Callers are also very interested in being involved in medical decisions (84 percent). About 90 percent of those questioned rated the information provided as very helpful. A total of 3,658 callers including 1,997 patients took part in the survey answering questions about their overall satisfaction with the conversation and whether it helped to improve their understanding of treatment options, orientation, validation of information and to make them feel more certain.

Conclusion: As expected, evidence-based, individually relevant and comprehensible information in accordance with the GPGI guidelines have predominantly positive effects on people's ability to cope with the disease and on their self-competence.

First survey results will be presented at the conference.

Please find more information at www.ebm-netzwerk.de.

The Cancer Information Service (KID) answers your questions:

Phone (toll-free within Germany): 0800 - 420 30 40, free of charge daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

From abroad the telephone number is +49 (0)6221 999 8000 (chargeable).

E-mail: krebsinformationsdienst@dkfz.de

www.krebsinformationsdienst.de

Cancer information has *one* number: 0800 - 420 30 40

The Cancer Information Service (KID) has been the contact point for all questions about cancer since 1986. On its website, the service provides up-to-date knowledge, useful tips, addresses, links and references to specialist sources. It answers questions of advice-seekers via telephone, e-mail and face-to-face counseling offered in Heidelberg and Dresden. On the social network Facebook, it provides up-to-date news and invites users to share their views in discussions. The Cancer Information Service is a publicly funded service provided free of charge by the German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ). It therefore provides independent information that is free of any conflicts of interest and of any advertising.

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) with its more than 2,500 employees is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. At DKFZ, more than 1,000 scientists investigate how cancer develops, identify cancer risk factors and endeavor to find new strategies to prevent people from getting cancer. They develop novel approaches to make tumor diagnosis more precise and treatment of cancer patients more successful. The staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. Jointly with Heidelberg University Hospital, DKFZ has established the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg, where promising approaches from cancer research are translated into the clinic. In the German Consortium for Translational Cancer Research (DKTK), one of six German Centers for Health Research, DKFZ maintains translational centers at seven university partnering sites. Combining excellent university hospitals with high-profile research at a Helmholtz Center is an important contribution to improving the chances of cancer patients. DKFZ is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers, with ninety percent of its funding coming from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the remaining ten percent from the State of Baden-Württemberg.

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