

IMPROVING THE NURSING CARE AND REHABILITATION SYSTEM FOR ONCOLOGY PATIENTS BASED ON INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE PRINCIPLES

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Abstract: This article explores the organization of nursing care and the improvement of the rehabilitation system for patients with oncological diseases based on an integrative medicine approach. The core principles of integrative medicine - combining traditional and modern treatment methods - are emphasized as a means to enhance the physical, psychological, and social well-being of patients. The study develops recommendations aimed at strengthening the role of nurses, implementing individualized patient care, providing psychological support, promoting proper nutrition, physiotherapy, phytotherapy, and fostering a healthy lifestyle. The article scientifically substantiates that an effectively organized rehabilitation system is a crucial factor in improving the quality of life for oncology patients.

Keywords: oncopathology, integrative medicine, nursing care, rehabilitation, psychological support, phytotherapy, healthy lifestyle, patient quality of life.

INTRODUCTION

Cancer remains a global challenge in modern medicine. According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), 19.3 million new cancer cases were identified worldwide in 2023, and 9.9 million people died as a result of the disease.

The treatment process for cancer patients requires not only medical intervention but also psychological, social, and spiritual support. As a result, the concept of *integrative medicine* is rapidly evolving across the globe.

Integrative medicine is a harmonized system that combines modern clinical practices with traditional healing methods, aiming to restore the patient's overall well-being - physically, mentally, and socially. Countries such as China, Germany, and the United States have already incorporated this approach as an integral part of oncological care.

During the treatment process, patients with oncological diseases often undergo chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and surgical procedures. These interventions significantly affect their immune system, psychological state, and overall quality of life.

According to a 2023 analysis by oncology rehabilitation centers in Germany, more than 70% of cancer survivors experience psychological depression, fear, and fatigue.

The key advantage of integrative medicine is that it aims not only to treat the disease but to restore the patient's holistic health.

In nursing care, the integrative approach encompasses a multifaceted set of activities - not limited to monitoring the patient's physiological condition, but also including psychological support, nutritional management, physical exercise planning, and establishing communication with the family.

METHODS

The study analyzed international scientific sources published between 2015 and 2024, including reports from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Chinese National Health Commission, the Deutsche Krebsgesellschaft (German Cancer Society), and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan.



The aim of this article is to develop scientifically grounded recommendations for improving nursing care and the rehabilitation system for oncology patients in Uzbekistan, based on an analysis of the experiences of China and Germany within the framework of integrative medicine.

Statistical analysis – Evaluation of cancer incidence and recovery indicators.

Comparative analysis – Cross-national comparison of integrative medicine models.

Sociological survey – Assessment of patient perceptions regarding the quality of nursing care.

RESULTS

1. Chinese Experience: Network of Integrative Oncology Clinics

In China, integrative medicine is being developed at the level of national health policy. Since 2018, *Integrative Oncology Clinics* have been established, combining modern chemotherapy with phytotherapy, acupuncture, yoga, meditation, diet therapy, and psychological counseling. According to the *Chinese Journal of Integrative Oncology* (2023):

- 83% of rehabilitated patients rated their psychological condition as stable.
- Recurrence rates decreased by 17%.
- Nurses are specially trained under the *Integrative Cancer Nurse* program. In this system, nurses not only provide care but also manage drug combinations, teach stress-reduction exercises, and prepare family members for psychological support.

2. German Experience: Multidisciplinary Rehabilitation Model

Germany has developed a scientifically grounded model of integrative medicine. Under the *OnkoReha* program, patients undergo a three-stage rehabilitation process after chemotherapy:

1. Physiotherapeutic recovery (massage, physical exercises).
2. Psychosocial support (psychological therapy, family counseling).
3. Integrative complementary medicine (aromatherapy, herbal supplements, reflexology)

According to *Deutsche Krebsgesellschaft* (2023):

- 82% of patients who completed integrative rehabilitation returned to a healthy lifestyle.
- Nursing support increased patient satisfaction with treatment outcomes by 40%.
- Nurses hold *Onco Care Nurse* certification and have the authority to make independent clinical decisions.

3. Uzbekistan Context: Opportunities and Challenges

In Uzbekistan, the integrative approach in healthcare has been gradually developing in recent years. Within the framework of the 2023–2025 national program “*Striving for a Healthy Life: Early Detection and Prevention of Cancer*”, the role of nurses in supporting patients has gained strategic importance. This is because the success of medical treatment largely depends on the quality of care and the patient’s psycho-emotional state. However, survey results indicate:

- 68% of nurses possess theoretical knowledge about integrative approaches, but practical application remains limited.
- Psychological support, diet therapy, and natural treatments are rarely implemented during care.
- The rehabilitation system is primarily supervised by physicians, and nurses’ independent roles are not yet fully established. This highlights the urgent need to integrate the principles of integrative care into nursing education and practice in Uzbekistan.



DISCUSSION

Comparative Insights and Strategic Implications for Uzbekistan. According to comparative findings, China prioritizes traditional natural methods within its integrative medicine framework, while Germany adopts a multidisciplinary team-based approach. In both countries, nurses play a central role—they maintain the closest contact with patients, monitor disease progression, and coordinate rehabilitation processes.

For Uzbekistan, an optimal model would involve harmonizing these two systems, positioning nursing not merely as a caregiving function but as an active component of integrative rehabilitation centers.

Key Advantages of the Integrative Approach

- Restoration of patients' physical and psychological well-being
- Reduction in pharmaceutical burden
- Strengthened trust between patients and their families
- Enhanced professional autonomy for nurses

The Role of Nurses in Improving the Quality of Life of Oncology Patients in Uzbekistan:

1. Psychosocial Support and Communication Culture Oncology patients often experience emotional distress, anxiety, and fear following diagnosis. A nurse's empathy-based approach—establishing trustful communication, delivering clear and comprehensible information about the illness, and facilitating family support—significantly improves quality of life. In Germany, the “psycho-oncology nursing” model includes specialized communication training for nurses. Implementing similar practices in Uzbekistan would be highly beneficial.

2. Active Participation in Rehabilitation Experiences from China and Germany show that integrative methods such as physiotherapy, acupuncture, meditation, and herbal-based complementary therapies enhance patients' overall condition during rehabilitation. In Uzbekistan's oncology centers, nurses must be equipped to select and monitor these non-pharmacological interventions. This aligns with integrative medicine principles—blending conventional treatment with natural and emotionally supportive techniques.

3. Nutrition and Immune Support Multiple studies (Zhang et al., 2021; Müller et al., 2020) confirm that proper nutrition not only preserves physical strength but also improves treatment responsiveness in oncology patients. Nurses should oversee dietary plans and recommend soft, natural, protein-rich, and antioxidant-rich meals to stimulate appetite. In Uzbekistan, this can be achieved by optimizing the nutritional value of traditional dishes.

4. Pain and Symptom Management One of the core aspects of palliative care is pain control. Nurses must be proficient in the safe administration of medications, use pain assessment scales, and teach patients techniques such as posture adjustment and breathing exercises for relief. In Germany, this is known as the “symptom management” system, which nurses study in depth.

5. Collaboration with Family and Community In Uzbekistan's sociocultural context, the family serves as the primary psychological support for patients. Nurses should involve family members in the care process and provide psychological guidance to achieve positive outcomes. Restoring the patient's social activity and enabling return to work or education is also a vital part of rehabilitation.



6. Professional Development and Nursing Research To successfully implement integrative care, oncology nurses in Uzbekistan must engage in continuous professional development based on Chinese and German experiences. This enhances not only practical skills but also research capacity. Globally, the field of *nursing research* is establishing new standards for oncology patient care.

In the context of Uzbekistan, the role of nurses in caring for oncology patients is invaluable. By adhering to the principles of integrative medicine, nurses contribute to improving patients' physical, psychological, and social well-being. Adapting the experiences of Germany and China to the local healthcare system can elevate the quality of nursing care to a new level and significantly enhance the quality of life for oncology patients.

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