

Forming the Self in daily life at home when living with advanced cancer

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By: *Jesper Larsen Mærsk*, Occupational Therapist, Cand. Paed. PhD. student

Primary Advisor: *Karen la Cour*, Associate Professor, OT., MSc., PhD.

English resumé

Background

The overall purpose of this thesis was to explore how self of people with advanced cancer is formed through their daily life, primarily in the home. Specifically, the self of people with advanced cancer was explored with regard to engagement in occupations (daily activities), the challenges of living in the home environment and maintaining daily habits.

In European countries the number of people suffering from life-threatening illnesses like advanced cancer is increasing. In Denmark the organization and provision of care and treatment of people with advanced cancer is gradually shifting from institutional settings to the privacy of home.

Empirical and theoretical informed research have suggested that the self is formed and maintained as people engage in occupations and interact with the material environment of home, as well as through their habitual ways of living and handling conditions of daily life. However, currently little is known of how the challenges of living at home and managing treatment and care influence the self of people with advanced cancer.

Aim

The thesis comprised of three studies:

- I. Purpose: To explore ways formation of self is influence by occupational engagement among people with advanced cancer.
- II. Purpose: To explore how the challenges of living at home and the provision of home-care support or threaten identity among people with advanced cancer.
- III. Purpose: To explore how self and daily habits of people with advanced cancer are influenced and formed as abilities decline and care and treatment is managed..

Method

Grounded Theory methodology guided collection and analysis of data. Data was collected primarily through in-depth interviews and participant diaries from 22 people with advanced cancer, four spouses, and three health-care professionals.

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