

Narrativ fleksibilitet i sygdomsforløb med kræft – kræftpatienters fortællinger om etableret og alternativ behandling.

Abstract

This paper explores Danish cancer patients' narratives on spiritual beliefs, practices and the relationship these practices may have to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM).

Narrative inquiry was used to understand how spiritual beliefs and practices might be related to CAM. Thirty-two cancer patients, family, friends and alternative practitioners were followed up over a two year period by face to face interview, telephone and focus groups.

Although religious and spiritual issues were not manifestly expressed by many of the subjects, these issues were significantly elaborated upon in narratives by four female participants to warrant more detailed consideration and analysis.

It is suggested that for some cancer patients CAM may function, not just as a treatment for cancer related symptoms and side effects, but also as a form of spiritual practice. For some individuals a belief in the 'spiritual' role of CAM per se may be analogous to religious belief.