

ABSTRACT

Patients with terminal heart failure that cannot be treated with conventional therapies are indicated for heart transplantation. In acute deterioration, patients can be brought to transplant using a mechanical cardiac support that is able to partially or completely take over the role of the heart and allow the restoration of sufficient cardiac output (Fila et al., 2014). The period before and after transplantation represents a very challenging period for patients, when they feel not only physical, but especially mental and social needs, which change during their phases of life and at the same time affect their entire subsequent experience.

The main goal of this diploma thesis was to monitor how the previous implantation of long-term mechanical cardiac support and the subsequent heart transplantation affect the needs and feelings of patients. Respondents were selected from patients who had been implanted with mechanical cardiac support prior to heart transplantation. The diploma thesis contained another five sub-objectives, which dealt with mapping the needs of patients before and after implantation of long-term mechanical cardiac support and after heart transplantation, as well as during compliance with regimen measures, information retrieval and education. For qualitative research, the method of data collection using individual semi-structured interviews was chosen. Based on the data analysis, a total of 16 categories were created. For better comprehensibility and orientation in the text, these categories were divided into 5 main chapters within the interpretation of the results, which focus on individual partial research questions. The research sample consisted of a total of 6 respondents who were duly acquainted with the circumstances and ethical aspects of the thesis before starting the research.

The results of the diploma thesis described in detail the course of the changing needs of the respondents on the basis of a retrospective perception of the given phase of the disease. Biological needs prevailed mainly in the period before the implantation of mechanical cardiac support and also during convalescence after both demanding surgical procedures. The psychological needs accompanied the respondents especially during the adaptation to changes related to their life situation, which was also related to the social needs that the respondents felt after returning to their home environment and integrating back into social life. The diploma thesis also brings the finding that the respondents did not significantly feel the limitations related to the regime measures, but on the contrary perceived the complete satisfaction of the need to obtain an adequate amount of information regarding the postoperative regime. The results have shown that all needs interact and complement each other at all times.

Based on the identified needs and feelings of the respondents, the output of this diploma thesis is an information leaflet containing the subjective perception of all phases of the disease through the eyes of patients who have experienced it. The leaflet could serve as a psychological support both for patients before the heart transplant itself and for those who have already had surgery.

keywords: heart transplantation, cardiac surgery, heart failure, mechanical cardiac support, patient needs, quality of life