"IT MUST BE HARDER FOR HIM THAN IT IS FOR ME".

DR JANE DAVIES
AN EXPLORATION OF THE EXPERIENCE AND ROLES OF THE PARTNERS OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH CANCER
"IT MUST BE HARDER FOR HIM THAN IT IS FOR ME".

- Funded by RCBC Wales as a postdoctoral fellowship
- A young adult advisory group was formulated prior to the study
- Contributed to the research design
- Assisted with development of participant materials
- Engaged in a reflection of study findings
- Considered recommendations based on partner support linked to the findings.
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- The objectives were as follows:
  - To explore the nature of the experience relating to the partners of adolescents and young adults between 16 and 24 with cancer
  - To understand what helps and what hinders in the context of partners giving support to adolescents and young adults with cancer
  - To provide an in-depth account of the types of support that partners provide
  - To develop a substantive evidenced based toolkit for partners of adolescents and young adults with cancer in this age group, thus enabling them to provide the most effective support.
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- Narrative approach with a view to telling a story
- 10 participants aged between 16 to 30 who had been in a relationship with someone for at least three months and where cancer treatment was ongoing
- Two interviews eight weeks apart allowing for different contexts over time
- Diary keeping for eight weeks
- Thematic analysis.
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• The importance of presence and advice prior to diagnosis
• Being there when the news of diagnosis came
• The parental context
• Partners continuing with work and education, the usefulness of support
• The experience of physical and emotional care: The scale of the role and the impact on the relationship
• Getting through.
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Extracts from Ellen’s experience
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- Summary and Recommendations
- In this study, partners had a central role both prior to diagnosis, at the point of diagnosis and during treatment when adolescents and young adults had cancer.
- There appears to be complexity in relation to the ways in which parents are involved during the cancer trajectory when adolescents and young adults are engaged in romantic relationships.
- Partners everyday lives need to be considered with respect to education and work.
- Professionals need to be aware of the impact of caring on partners and develop strategies to help in this context.
- Partners need advice about how to 'get through'.
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References:

• Davies, J. 2015. The fluctuation of agency in teenagers and young adults with cancer. Unpublished PhD, Cardiff University.

• Davies, Jane. 2019. The experience and role of partners in helping to meet the support needs of adolescents and young adults with cancer. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 75, 5, pp. 1119-1125. 10.1111/jan.13944


