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The diabetic foot patients and their family caregivers decision making process of patients' amputation

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Diabetes has been the fourth leading cause of death in Taiwan since 2002. Patients, who have diabetic foot, as well as their caregivers, are faced with the burden of possible limb amputation and treatment. The objective of this study was to explore the diabetic foot patients and their family caregiver's decision making process of patients' amputation. Grounded theory was utilized in this study. 16 participants were recruited from hospital using purposive sampling in middle of Taiwan. The data analysis was conducted through open coding, axial coding, selective coding and memo writing. The study revealed that the decision-making process of amputation from the point of view of patients and their caregivers consisted of following categories. The three categories were "the experiences multiple diseases", "the experience of treatment in wounds difficult to heal" and "the decision to amputate". The core category of the decision-making process of amputation was "the choice of survive- amputation". The study results indicated that the patients and their family caregivers experienced anxiety and feelings of helplessness during the decision-making process of amputation caused by diabetic foot because of the extreme difficulty and dilemmatic nature of the decision. Therefore, after understanding the patients' medical history and decision-making process regarding amputation, healthcare professionals are encouraged to empathize such patients, respect the patients' and family caregivers' decision and thereby provide them with necessary care. The recommendation for future research may include health care professionals' perspective and family care process for amputees to understand the decision-making process of patients who require amputation.

Biography

Ju-Fen Liu has completed her Master of Science Degree from Hungkuang University, Taiwan. She is a Registered Nurse for 20 years. She held the ACLS certificate and she is the Head Nurse of Surgical Intensive Care Unit for two years. She has nursing management experiences for ten years in Kuang Tien General Hospital, Taiwan.

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