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Analytical study of patients with breast cancer reporting late to Regional Cancer Centre, Allahabad and its association with sociodemographic profile in Indian women

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Background: Breast cancer poses a major threat to public health, attributing to the fact that for every two women newly diagnosed with breast cancer, one woman dies of it in India.

Objectives: To explore factors associated with delay in seeking referral for cancer treatment among breast cancer patients and evaluate the association between late presentation of the breast cancer and sociodemographic profile.

Methods: This analytical study design has been conducted at RCC from January 2015 to January 2016. Total patients enrolled in the study were 376 women. Data were collected and recorded using a structured interview technique by the doctors.

Results: 31% (n=117) of patients reported ≤ 3 months and 69% (n=259) of patients have reported > 3 months to RCC. Out of 259 patients, 67% and 33% were attributed to patient delay and system delay respectively. The most common reason of patient delay and system delay were usage of alternative medicines (33%) and delay in sanctioning money through government schemes (33%) respectively. Family history, educational background, economic status, occupation, religion, personal history of breast disease, stage grouping and pattern of presentation were significantly associated with late reporting to RCC ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Significant number of women with breast cancer in Allahabad experience reported late to RCC due to poor awareness and misconceptions of the disease. Interactive and comprehensive public health strategy should be implemented for annihilation of barriers.

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