

Abstract Form

In 250-350 words, define the research problem, state the significance of the research, and present the research methodology and plan for analysis. **DO NOT USE A SEPARATE SHEET.**

Purpose/Specific Aims: 1) Describe the experiences of adult rectal cancer patients and their partners during rehabilitation from cancer treatment; and, 2) Examine health-related quality of life (HR-QOL) issues for rectal cancer patients and their partners including well-being and coping during their rehabilitation. Significance of the research: In 2007, the American Cancer Society estimated that rectal cancer affects over 153,760 adult patients as the third leading cause of cancer in both men and women in the United States. The 5-yr disease free survival for patients with stage II/III disease treated with neoadjuvant chemoradiotherapy followed by surgery is in the range of 60-70%. Current gaps in knowledge exist for rectal cancer survivors regarding altered bowel function and HR- QOL from partners' perspectives both individually and together during rehabilitation and in cancer survivorship. Methodology: Qualitative descriptive design. Setting: Recruitment of 20 adult rectal cancer patients and their partners from an academic health science hospital and cancer center. Sample: Face to face semi-structured interviews using an interview guide include a purposive sampling of stage II/III rectal cancer survivors at least 6 months-2 years after treatment to describe their rehabilitation experience. Maximum variation sampling techniques will be used to include a minimum of 40 interviews or 20 partners. This qualitative approach will provide broad information on the survivor and partners' perspectives on recovery treatment to determine future study design and sampling.

Plan for Analysis: Qualitative descriptive method with qualitative content analysis will be employed for interview analysis. Verification will occur through trustworthiness of data including rich, thick description. NVIVOv2. software will be used to manage the data analysis. Content analysis will be used to inductively derive themes comprising a logical summary that include range of responses to the patient and partners' experiences. Confirmability of interpretation and analysis of findings will be undertaken with expert consultants. Implications: Oncology and rehabilitation nurses and providers can utilize these results in ongoing care and support to maintain QOL during rehabilitation.