Evaluation of Web-based Ostomy Patient Support Resources

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**Abstract:**

More than 120,000 new intestinal ostomies, or surgically-created openings through the abdomen for bowel elimination, are created annually in North America. Up to 80% of patients with a new ostomy experience ostomy-related complications that diminish quality of life. Short hospital stays and fragmented follow-up care make it difficult for people with ostomies to obtain needed information, self-management training and support. Web-based patient support resources may provide essential information that promotes effective self-management, minimizes complications, and enhances adjustment to illness and health-related quality of life. We propose to collaborate with industry (Hollister) experts to evaluate and improve web-based patient support resources that are currently available for patients with an intestinal ostomy. This collaboration, which combines the expertise of scientists from clinical practice, industry, and academia will follow a step-wise approach to accomplish the following two specific aims: 1) conduct a gap analysis of the patient ostomy support materials available on 4 major websites; 2) evaluate reach, acceptability, usability and satisfaction with web-based patient support materials available patients who have undergone surgery for placement of an intestinal ostomy; and 3) determine patient needs and preferences for ostomy self-management support. Future research will include development and testing the efficacy of a web-based patient support intervention to reduce ostomy complications, improve ostomy self-management knowledge and skills and improve outcomes for patients with an ostomy.