

**INVESTIGATION OF USE OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE
MEDICINES/ TRADITIONAL MEDICINE BY BREAST CANCER PATIENTS AT MOI
TEACHING AND REFERRAL HOSPITAL IN ELDORET.**

BY

PAULINE OTAMBO-CHEBON

Reg. No. BPH/09/00015

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
PHARMACOLOGY IN THE SCHOOL OF PHARMACY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF
PHARMACY OF THE MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

AUGUST 2013

ABSTRACT

Cancer kills more than 7 million people annually. Breast cancer is now the number one killer of women of 35 to 55 years in Kenya. Many working hours are lost due to illness and being a chronic life threatening disease especially if not detected early, cancer brings grief, emotional sufferings and poverty to families. As breast cancer incidence rate and survival time increase, use of CAM/TM will increase. The cost of chemotherapy is prohibitive to poor populations in developing countries. The side effects and drug interactions noted in conventional chemotherapeutic agents and CAM/TM are of concern. To enhance immune function, improve emotional well-being, coping with breast cancer symptoms, treatment, and having a healthier lifestyle is paramount. There is a need to establish use of CAM/TM by breast cancer survivors. Health care providers attending to breast cancer patients were interviewed. Questionnaires on knowledge, use, and types of CAM/TM use were administered in a descriptive quantitative interview design. Data generated was coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 16.0. Results were presented in frequency tables and figures. It was evident that breast cancer survivors use CAM/TM concurrently with conventional chemotherapy. From this project development of well-designed clinical trials to ascertain safety and effectiveness can be done. Useful information sources to HCPs and patients on drug interactions, sources, services accessed, cost and reception of CAM/TM can be readily available. Documentation and discussion of CAM/TM use should be integrated into routine assessment for all cancer patients in all medical encounters.