
Postgraduate Certificate in Psycho-Oncology

Psycho-Oncology: Advanced Topics

****Adherence:**** The degree to which a person's behavior coincides with medical advice. In psycho-oncology, adherence refers to patients following their cancer treatment plans, including medication, therapy, and lifestyle changes.

Related terms: Compliance, concordance

Concept: Adherence is a crucial factor in cancer treatment outcomes. Non-adherence can lead to reduced treatment effectiveness, increased side effects, and disease progression. Adherence can be influenced by various factors, such as the complexity of treatment regimens, side effects, mental health, and patient-provider communication.

****Advance Care Planning (ACP):**** A process that helps individuals plan for future medical care in the event they become unable to make decisions for themselves. ACP typically involves discussions with healthcare providers, family members, and loved ones about treatment goals, values, and preferences.

Related terms: End-of-life care, palliative care, advance directive

Concept: ACP is essential in psycho-oncology to ensure that patients receive care consistent with their values and goals. ACP can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression for patients and their families and improve the quality of life and end-of-life care.

****Bereavement:**** The state of mourning after losing a loved one, often characterized by feelings of sadness, guilt, anger, and disbelief.

Related terms: Grief, mourning, loss

Concept: Bereavement is a common experience among family members and loved ones of cancer patients. Psycho-oncology professionals can help bereaved individuals cope with their loss through counseling, support groups, and other interventions.

****Cancer-Related Fatigue (CRF):**** A persistent feeling of tiredness or exhaustion that interferes with daily

activities and is not relieved by rest. CRF is a common side effect of cancer and its treatment.

Related terms: Fatigue, asthenia, quality of life

Concept: CRF can significantly impact patients' quality of life and ability to perform daily activities. Psycho-oncology professionals can help manage CRF through non-pharmacological interventions such as exercise, energy conservation, and cognitive-behavioral therapy.

****Cancer-Related Distress (CRD):**** A multifactorial unpleasant emotional experience of a psychological (cognitive, behavioral, emotional), social, and/or spiritual nature that may interfere with the ability to cope effectively with cancer, its physical symptoms, and its treatment.

Related terms: Distress, anxiety, depression

Concept: CRD is a common experience among cancer patients, affecting up to 50% of patients. Psycho-oncology professionals can help manage CRD through screening, assessment, and interventions such as counseling, support groups, and medication.

****Caregiver Burden:**** The physical, emotional, and financial strain experienced by individuals providing care to a loved one with cancer.

Related terms: Caregiving, family caregiving, informal caregiving

Concept: Caregiver burden can significantly impact the well-being of caregivers, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and depression. Psycho-oncology professionals can help caregivers cope with their burden through counseling, support groups, and other interventions.

****Chemobrain:**** A common term used to describe cognitive changes, such as difficulties with memory, attention, and processing speed, experienced by some cancer patients during or after chemotherapy.

Related terms: Cognitive impairment, cognitive dysfunction, chemotherapy-induced cognitive changes

Concept: Chemobrain can significantly impact patients' daily functioning and quality of life. Psycho-oncology professionals can help manage chemobrain through interventions such as cognitive rehabilitation, exercise, and energy conservation.

****Communication:**** The exchange of information, ideas, and emotions between individuals, often between patients and healthcare providers.

Related terms: Communication skills, patient-provider communication, communication styles

Concept: Effective communication is essential in psycho-oncology to ensure patients understand their diagnosis, treatment options, and care plans. Communication can also help build trust, rapport, and therapeutic relationships between patients and healthcare providers.

****Decision-Making:**** The process of selecting among different options or courses of action.

Related terms: Shared decision-making, informed decision-making, patient-centered decision-making

Concept: Decision-making is a crucial aspect of cancer care, involving patients, families, and healthcare providers. Psycho-oncology professionals can help patients make informed decisions through counseling, education, and support.

****Depression:**** A common mental health disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest or pleasure in activities.

Related terms: Major depressive disorder, depressive disorder, mood disorder

Concept: Depression is a common experience among cancer patients, affecting up to 25% of patients. Psycho-oncology professionals can help manage depression through counseling, medication, and other interventions.

****Disclosure:**** The act of revealing or sharing information, often related to a patient's cancer diagnosis or prognosis.

Related terms: Breaking bad news, truth-telling, open communication

Concept: Disclosure is a crucial aspect of psycho-oncology, involving communication between patients, families, and healthcare providers. Disclosure can impact patients' psychological well-being, treatment adherence, and quality of life.

****Distress Thermometer:**** A self-reported measure of cancer-related distress, using a visual analog scale

ranging from 0 to 10.

Related terms: Cancer-related distress, distress screening, assessment tool

Concept: The distress thermometer is a quick and easy way to assess cancer-related distress, helping psycho-oncology professionals identify patients in need of intervention.

****End-of-Life Care:**** The care provided to patients in the final stages of a life-limiting illness, focusing on comfort, quality of life, and symptom management.

Related terms: Palliative care, hospice care, advance care planning

Concept: End-of-life care is an essential aspect of psycho-oncology, often involving interdisciplinary teams of healthcare providers, patients, and families.

****Existential Distress:**** A type of distress related to questions about the meaning and purpose of life, often experienced by individuals facing life-threatening illnesses such as cancer.

Related terms: Spiritual distress, meaning-making, existential anxiety

Concept: Existential distress can significantly impact cancer patients' psychological well-being, quality of life, and treatment adherence. Psycho-oncology professionals can help patients cope with existential distress through counseling, support groups, and other interventions.

****Fatigue:**** A feeling of exhaustion, tiredness, or lack of energy, often related to cancer or its treatment.

Related terms: Cancer-related fatigue, asthenia, quality of life

Concept: Fatigue is a common experience among cancer patients, affecting up to 90% of patients. Psycho-oncology professionals can help manage fatigue through non-pharmacological interventions such as exercise, energy conservation, and cognitive-behavioral therapy.

****Family Caregiving:**** The provision of physical, emotional, and practical support to a loved one with cancer, often by family members or close friends.

Related terms: Caregiver burden, informal caregiving, family support

Concept: Family caregiving is a crucial aspect of psycho-oncology, often involving communication, education, and support for both patients and caregivers.

Fear of Recurrence (FOR): A common concern among cancer survivors, characterized by anxiety or worry about the cancer returning or progressing.

Related terms: Cancer worry, uncertainty, anxiety

Concept: FOR can significantly impact cancer survivors' psychological well-being, quality of life, and treatment adherence. Psycho-oncology professionals can help manage FOR through counseling, support groups, and other interventions.

Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQOL): A multidimensional concept encompassing physical, emotional, and social well-being related to an individual's health status and healthcare.

Related terms: Quality of life, patient-reported outcomes, symptom management

Concept: HRQOL is an essential aspect of psycho-oncology, often involving communication, assessment