



## Psycho-oncology nursing-less focused discipline in clinical practice in the oncology sector

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### Abstract

Cancer is one of the causing of morbidity and mortality in the world. Cancer may affect any part of the body. As per WHO data, Cancer accounted for nearly 10 million worldwide deaths in 2020, The most common in were breast (2.26 million cases), lung (2.21 million cases), colon and rectum (1.93 million cases), prostate (1.41 million cases), skin (non-melanoma) (1.20 million cases); and stomach (1.09 million cases). The most common causes of cancer death in 2020 are lung (1.80 million deaths), colon and rectum (935 000 deaths), liver (830 000 deaths), stomach (769 000 deaths); and breast (685 000 deaths). Experts from the oncology and psychiatry discipline stressed that cancer does not just affect our body but it also takes a toll on the mind as well, and the patient experiences a significant difference in their emotional health, developed health conditions like depression.

**Conclusion:** For the better mental health of cancer patients, there is a need for specialized training courses for psycho-oncology nursing. There is a need for more research in the field of psycho-oncology nursing. After Post graduation in nursing. Super specialization certification courses may be started to train nurses especially in handling the psycho-social aspect of cancer patients.

**Keywords:** nursing-less, clinical practice, cancer, WHO data

### Introduction

Cancer is one of the causing of morbidity and mortality in the world. Cancer may affect any part of the body. As per WHO data, Cancer accounted for nearly 10 million worldwide deaths in 2020, The most common in were breast (2.26 million cases), lung (2.21 million cases), colon and rectum (1.93 million cases), prostate (1.41 million cases), skin (non-melanoma) (1.20 million cases); and stomach (1.09 million cases). The most common causes of cancer death in 2020 are lung (1.80 million deaths), colon and rectum (935 000 deaths), liver (830 000 deaths), stomach (769 000 deaths); and breast (685 000 deaths)<sup>[1]</sup>. Cancer is also responsible for causing infections, such as hepatitis and human papillomavirus (HPV). Cancer not affects only health it affects economic status also due to long-term treatment and costly medication and diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Consumption of Tobacco or alcohol, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and air pollution, carcinogenic infections, including *Helicobacter pylori*, human papillomavirus (HPV), hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus, and Epstein-Barr virus are the risk factors causing cancers. India is no exception to this, population-based cancer registries within the National Cancer Registry Programme and outside the network have provided a picture of the cancer pattern in India based on which it is estimated that there will be about 800,000 new cancer cases in India every year. At any given point, the prevalence is likely to be three times this load that is about 2,400,000 cases in a year.

### Mental illness in cancer patients

Experts from the oncology and psychiatry discipline stressed that cancer does not just affect our body but it also takes a toll on the mind as well, and the patient experiences a significant difference in their emotional health, developed

health conditions like depression. It has been found that people with depression are more prone to cancer-related outcomes as they are less likely to follow the treatment plans<sup>[2]</sup>. Between 2001 and 2014, as many as 10,421 cancer patients in India committed suicide, a study published in the Indian Journal of Cancer found, pegging the rate of such incidents to an alarming 744 deaths every year<sup>[2]</sup>. The experience of being diagnosed with cancer has been linked with high levels of psychological stress. Correlations between neoplasia and the psychological problem were identified by the various physician at numerous 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century physicians, An illness like cancer can have various psychiatric sequelae as a result of the disease itself or due to associated problems. The diagnosis of cancer itself when revealed to the patient can cause emotional reactions such as shock and disbelief, followed by anger, depression, loss, and grief. Stress response syndrome is the most common mental health problem for patients with cancer.

### Psycho-oncology

Psycho-oncology is a super specialty of the professional field of psychology and deals with the physical, psychological, social, and behavioral aspects of cancer in order to improve the overall quality of life<sup>[3]</sup>. In order to be able to plan interventions efficiently, it is important to gain knowledge about the prevalence, severity, course of the psychological consequences, and the variables that influence them. In the various states of India where cancer incidence is rising, an accurate estimate of the prevalence of the psychiatric disorder is very important in planning management strategies. In this context, the study is more intended to determine the prevalence of psychiatric illnesses in cancer patients. Based on the prevalence it is also necessary to understand the causative factor of psychiatric

disorder in cancer patients, and preventive measures to reduce the prevalence of the psychiatric disorder in cancer patients.

#### **Psycho-oncologist play role in the following ways**

- Coping patients with diagnosis and treatment in the inpatient and outpatient departments.
- Helping patients adjust to change and loss due to cancer.
- Taking about changes with patients bodies (Body image issues)
- Helping the patient in dealing with changes in relationships and physical intimacy, sexual concerns.
- Support the patient to cope with the difficulty in balancing work, home, and family life
- Providing psychosocial support to patients who have feelings of sadness, anger, anxiety, and depression due to cancer and its long-term treatments.
- Providing psychosocial support to patients who are in distress about pain, fatigue, and treatment side-effects (Acute/Chronic)
- Helping the patients about Living with uncertainty, including fear of recurrence, advanced disease, and end of life care
- Emotional support for family and friends (Diagnosis & bereavement)

#### **Psycho-oncology Nursing**

Psycho-oncology nursing is a super-specialty of the professional field of psychiatric Nursing, it mainly deals with the physical, psychological, social, and behavioral aspects of patients with cancer in the inpatient and outpatient services to improve the overall quality of life.

#### **Role and responsibility of Psycho-oncology Nurse**

Nurses working on the front line of cancer care are expected to play an important role in psychological care for cancer patients <sup>[4]</sup>. Nurses working in cancer care centers are expected to be able to recognize psychological needs during assessment and to provide effective information, compassionate communication, and general psychological support in interventions <sup>[4]</sup>. To improve the quality of living for patients as well as family Nurses plays the following role-

1. Nurses should assess the patient's mental status.
2. Helping the patient to cope with psychological stress due to various diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.
3. Supports patients in adjustment to change such as Body image issues and loss due to a cancer
4. Helping in Dealing with changes in patients such as relationships and physical intimacy, sexual concerns, Difficulty balancing work, home, and family life.
5. Organize a therapeutic session for patients with feelings of sadness, anger, fear and depression, despair over pain, fatigue, and treatment side effects (acute/chronic), living with uncertainty including fear of recurrence, advanced disease, and terminal care.
6. Providing Emotional support for family and friends (Diagnosis & bereavement)
7. Helping in 1.
8. Providing psychosocial support to patients living with metastatic cancer, and palliative treatments.

#### **Conclusion**

For the better mental health of cancer patients, there is a need for specialized training courses for psycho-oncology nursing. There is a need for more research in the field of psycho-oncology nursing. After Post graduation in nursing. Super specialization certification courses may be started to train nurses especially in handling the psycho-social aspect of cancer patients.

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