


MENTAL HEALTH

Ali Cain, MSW, LICSW, OSW-C
Oncology Social Worker and Licensed Therapist
Allina Health Cancer Institute- St. Paul

Dimensions in Oncology
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DISCLOSURE

- I have no disclosures to report.

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OBJECTIVES

1

Participants will be able to describe the emotional impact a cancer diagnosis has on patients.

2

Participants will identify their role in caring for the emotional distress experienced by cancer patients.

3

Participants will be able to discuss the various resources available to support cancer patients.

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PSYCHOSOCIAL ONCOLOGY

Psychosocial Oncology is a clinical specialty that addresses the emotional and psychosocial concerns associated with a cancer diagnosis.

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Effects of a Cancer Diagnosis on Mental Health

- There can be significant psychosocial effects of a cancer diagnosis, especially amongst patients with a pre-existing mental health condition.



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Why is this important?

One in three people with cancer experience mental or emotional distress. It is most common in breast cancer (42%) and head and neck cancer (41%) patients.

Up to 25% of cancer survivors experience symptoms of depression and up to 45% experience anxiety.

Many cancer survivors also experience symptoms meeting the criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Cancer survivors are twice as likely to die by suicide than the general population.

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Negative effects of untreated mental health needs.

There can be consequences for failing to address patients' mental health needs.

- Longer hospital stays
- Treatment delays
- Poor medication adherence
- Worse outcomes
- Poorer quality of life
- Increased risk of recurrence
- Increased risk of suicide
- Financial toxicity, work related issues, family problems

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Diagnoses and Interventions

Diagnoses commonly treated:

- Major Depressive Disorder
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Adjustment Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Effective interventions:

- Psychotherapy including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Mindfulness Practices, Meaning Centered Psychotherapy
- Medications- antidepressants, anti-anxiety medications
- Support groups and peer support programs

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Your Role



Emotional distress should be addressed early and often throughout a patient's course of treatment.

Normalize, Normalize, Normalize.

Listen for key words and don't be afraid to address them.

Offer interventions more than once.

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Referrals and Resources

Allina Health Cancer Institute- ANW, United, Mercy

- Oncology Counseling Services
 - Ali Cain, LICSW, St. Paul: 651.241.6408
 - Beth Johnson, LICSW, Coon Rapids: 763.236.6061
 - Sarah Johnson, LICSW, Minneapolis: 612.863.1704

Allina Mental Health and Addiction Medicine Care- 1.866.603.0016

Penny George Institute for Health and Healing- 612.863.3333

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Referrals and Resources

Support Groups

- Local and national groups and organizations
- Firefly Sisterhood- www.fireflysisterhood.org
- Imerman Angels- www.imermanangels.org
- CancerCare- www.cancercare.org
- Leukemia and Lymphoma Society- www.lls.org
- Jack's Caregiver Coalition- www.jackscaregiverco.org

Gilda's Club- www.gildasclubtwincities.org

Pathways- www.pathwaysminneapolis.org

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- <http://ascopubs.org/doi/abs/10.1200/JCO.2014.56.0086>
- Four-Week Prevalence of Mental Disorders in Patients With Cancer Across Major Tumor Entities Anja Mehnert, Elmar Brähler, Hermann Faller, Martin Härter, Monika Keller, Holger Schulz, Karl Wegscheider, Joachim Weis, Anna Boehncke, Bianca Hund, Katrin Reuter, Matthias Richard, Susanne Sehner, Sabine Sommerfeldt, Carina Szalai, Hans-Ulrich Wittchen, and Uwe Koch *Journal of Clinical Oncology* 2014 32:31, 3540-3546
- [Mental Health Impacts of a Cancer Diagnosis - #BHtheChange](#)

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TO CONTACT ME

Ali Cain, MSW, LICSW, OSW-C

Oncology Social Worker and Licensed Therapist

Allina Health Cancer Institute- St. Paul

Phone: 651.241.6408 • Fax: 651.241.5512 • E-Mail: alicia.cain@allina.com

Address: 225 N Smith Ave, Ste 200, St. Paul, MN 55102

