"YES" to Concerns about my partner



Do you have serious concerns a bout how your partner is handling your cancer diagnosis or in need of additional physical or emotional support?

Are you able to openly communicate with your partner about your illness? Is your partner supportive of you as you manage this illness?

Has your relationship changed between your partner?

Have you completed written documentation as to who would make healthcare decisions if you cannot?

If YES

If not significant:

- help to normalize this experience noting that it is not uncommon for partners to have difficulties with their loved one's cancer.
- Share Patient Links and Handouts as appropriate

If significant:

- suggest a referral to counseling or medical professional for the partner.
- Share Patient Links and Handouts

Refer to social worker or mental health counselors if there is

Next Step

Refer to appropriate support group in person or online, cancer resource or cancer support center and if possible, schedule an appointment with the service.

significant concern.

Share Patient Links and Handouts as appropriate

Depending on level of distress, can be discussion same day or within 1-3 days

Timing

If NO

Give a brief description of both Power of Attorney for Healthcare and POLST (if advanced stage).

- Provide online reference to:
 - o <u>The Conversation Project</u>
 - The Stanford Letter
 Project

Refer to Palliative Care or Social Worker or whomever in your institution assists with legal documentation

Instruct patient to keep copies of completed forms with them at all times

See link in References for CSOC Training Modules

Acute If patient is advanced stage w/a poor prognosis, otherwise, within 30 days

Notes

Stages I-III: It is important that the patient and partner's goals of care align or are understood (see link in References for CSOC Palliative Training Module *Goals of Care*). Patients or partners may be in need of more information or education. Encourage partner to attend all medical appointments, not attending medical appointments with patient can bring about communication issues.

Stage IV: Additional caregiver support, caregiver respite or end-of-life support may be needed at this stage.

Patient Links and Handouts:

- ACS. Caregivers and Family
- > LIVESTRONG. Communicating With Your Partner
- ➤ CancerCare, Online Caregiver Support Group Spouses/Partners
- Well Spouse Association. Suppor for Spousal Caregivers
- NIH. Informal Caregivers in Cancer (PDO®)—Patient Version
- NIH. Facing Cancer with Your Spouse or Partner
- Cancer.Net. Talking With Your Spouse or Partner

References:

- ➤ Informal Caregivers in Cancer: Roles, Burden, and Support (PDO®)—Health Professional Version
- CANCERCare Online Support Groups, share with patient/family/caregiver if clinician considers appropriate

CSOC Patient Handout can be accessed at:

http://cancer-help.me/partner

