Clinician Follow Up Reference for Supportive Care

Family/Caregiver Concerns -

"YES" to Concerns about other family members

Start With
Asking the patient the below questions

Approach

Next Step

Timing

Are you able to disclose your illness to your family members?

Do your family members need additional information about your illness that you need help to provide?

Are your family members supportive of you?

Do you family members need help to cope with your illness?

In what ways has your family relationships changed?

Do your family members have their own illnesses or challenges? If patient or family members are in need of assistance or additional information:

- see Patient links and Handouts for information and assistance with concerns
- Have a discussion/share relative options with the patient or family member
- Provide list of resources to the patient.
- If possible and wanted, help connect family member with resources

Document all responses and include in medical record and/or referral if referring to another medical professional If additional help is wanted, refer patient to social worker or physician/APN appropriately based on the specific concern.

Referral may include family members to discuss patient concerns, assuming patient is requesting this intervention.

Refer patient or family members to a cancer wellness community for information and support if available and wanted.

If family members are not coping well with the diagnosis, make appropriate referral to social worker, counselor, spiritual advisor based on family member's needs to provide the family member with support.

If family member is the caregiver, refer to social worker, counselor, or other appropriate mental health specialist to ensure that he/she is aware of the needs of this role and supports available if needed.

Share Patient Links and Handouts as appropriate.

Routine within 1 week
if not
interfering
with care or
unless there is
an immediate
concern to
the safety of
the patient or
family
member.

Routine within 1 week if not of immediate concern

Notes

Stages I-IV: When a patient does not have family member support, always document in medical record. This will be necessary in the event that this becomes a limiting factor to mental and physical care. Caregiver wellness is often critical to patient's ability to access medical treatment and wellbeing and safty at home; key is to determine their ability to meet the demand of this role and to be supported when needed. Caregivers should be told that there are support groups, in person/online/by phone, available to them if they begin to feel overwhelmed or isolated.

Patient Links and Handouts:

- > ASCO. Talking with Family and Friends
- > American Cancer Society, After Diagnosis: A Guide for Patients and Families
- > American Cancer Society, Helping Children when a Family Member Has Cancer
- > Cancer.Net. How Cancer Affects Family Life
- > NIH. Changes for the Family

CSOC Patient Handout can be accessed at:

http://cancer-help.me/family

References:

CANCERCare® Online Support Groups, share with patient/ family/caregiver if clinician considers appropriate

