ONCODAILY MEDICAL JOURNAL

abstract

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DOI: 10.69690/ODMJ-018-0425-1103

SIOP Asia, 2025, Saudi Arabia

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Early Integration of Palliative Care in Pediatric Oncology

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Introduction: Early integration of palliative care in pediatric oncology is of great importance in the timely provision of person-centered care to a child at the end of life. The participation of a palliative care physician when establishing an oncological diagnosis will increase the perception of early integration of palliative care to optimize its practice.

Methodology: Individual interviews were conducted with physicians and parents of 25 patients in the oncology department of a children's hospital to jointly create a plan for the current and future care and management of the child.

Results: Most of the interviewed parents reported that they were informed about the possible negative outcome of their child's disease, and about the possibilities of palliative care when it becomes clear that curative treatment options have been exhausted.Early integration of palliative care for terminally ill patients, including pain assessment and treatment, relief of distressing symptoms, family-oriented communication with parents, discussion and resolution of psychosocial issues, has improved the perception of the problem. The condition of parents directly affects the emotional state of the child and the degree of constructiveness of interaction with the team of specialists.
Inclusion of a team of psychologists in the process, normalization of the current psycho-emotional state of parents through the assistance in experiencing difficult feelings and emotions, in accepting the disease or inevitable death of the child is associated with the calmness of parents, a sense of recognition and consolation, as well as greater trust in medical personnel.

Conclusion: The results of the study emphasize the importance of early inclusion of palliative medical care in the treatment process, forming a trusting relationship between the family and the palliative team, which determines higher quality care at this stage of treatment.