

## Workshops

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### **Meeting cancer patient needs - developing symptom management**

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**Introduction:** This workshop aims to map the current state of knowledge of non-pharmacological interventions for cancer symptoms, but also to identify key principles for cancer nurses in implementing successful symptom management within their own practice.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Critically review the current knowledge base for cancer nursing symptom management practices
- Explore gaps in symptom assessment and management
- Identify strategies for assessing symptoms, as patient needs
- Explore the relationship between symptom assessment and management
- Investigate how symptom clusters impact on an individual's quality of life
- Review application of new evidence into the reality of symptom management practices within clinical care

**Indicative Content:** The success of cancer treatment and patient's quality of life is partially dependent on good symptom management practices. Symptom management is a major focus of cancer nursing work and has had an impact on how cancer treatment has developed. However, there are many difficult cancer symptoms where evidence is still limited as to the most appropriate intervention, for example urinary frequency, chronic nausea, gynaecological and menopausal symptoms. There is therefore much work still to be accomplished in developing symptom management practice. Principles from areas that have been well defined such as pain, vomiting and fatigue management can provide useful frameworks in the development and evaluation of new interventions. There are many barriers and difficulties in assessing effectively individual needs, resulting in sometimes complex and distressing symptoms, which have negative consequences for an individual's quality of life. One of the problems in defining effectively needs as a result of symptom occurrence is that symptoms are rarely experienced as isolated events and do not follow a linear progression. Symptoms also tend to come in clusters, and interact with one another; therefore teasing out the interactions is where new research work is focused, but this also has implications for intervention. Future strategies for symptom management therefore need to be multifaceted. Developing symptom management in the future of cancer care requires nurses to be competent in identifying individual priorities of a range of cancer symptoms and be able to address both physical and psychosocial needs.

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### **Guidelines for antiemetic treatment**

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Despite significant advances in the treatment of chemotherapy induced nausea and vomiting (CINV), these side effects still remain major concerns for many cancer patients. This is especially true for delayed CINV following cisplatin where up to 60% of the patients continue to suffer from nausea and vomiting. One reason for this may be the under utilization of available knowledge regarding important areas such as emetic risk factors, antiemetic guidelines and assessment of patient outcomes.

Extensive guidelines and recommendations to manage CINV have been published in the literature over the past several years. However, the complexity of these may limit their application in clinical practice resulting in some patients not being treated according to best current knowledge. Therefore, one of the learning objectives of this workshop is to gain insight into the development process and content of the existing evidence-based consensus guidelines. Examples will be given how the guidelines can be used in producing practice guidelines, applicable for use in the daily clinical routine. Also, implementation barriers and possible strategies to avoid the barriers will be discussed.

In addition to application of knowledge regarding guidelines other important factors should be considered to ensure optimal patient care of CINV. These may include individual risk assessment, patient education and targeted follow up with patient diaries. To enhance patient outcome it is also important to perform retrospective audits to ensure compliance with guidelines and clinical impact. This is an additional learning objective of the workshop and examples will be given how this can be performed.