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Ambulatory chemotherapy fostering empowerment in cancer patients: An introduction and a feasibility study in Lebanon

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It has been often reported that cancer patients experience a sense of loss of control towards their fluctuating symptoms, disease management impacting their autonomy, and their life as a whole. Studies have shown that shared decision making can empower patients, improve adherence and overall quality of life. Therefore, governments have initiated policies supporting the involvement of patients in the management of their own care. One innovation in this context is ambulatory chemotherapy (AC), delivering chemotherapy to patients outside the hospital using a portable elastomeric infusion pump. AC is renowned for decreasing cost of care, enhancing quality of life, and empowering patients to regain control and normalcy. AC has become the standard of care for certain cancers in most developed countries. In Lebanon, a developing Mediterranean country with substantial demands for healthcare services and outstanding expenses, AC is not widely adopted yet. This research work entails the development of a framework to facilitate the uptake of AC in Lebanon. It involved a needs assessment of stakeholders and patients to understand the barriers and facilitators. This talk will present an overview of ambulatory chemotherapy, the types of ambulatory pumps used, the patient journey, and finally a briefing of the work done in Lebanon to assess the feasibility of implementing this treatment modality. It is essential to assess the needs of the patients and the healthcare system for ambulatory chemotherapy to facilitate the commissioning this treatment modality and foster a strong infrastructure to support it

Recent Publications

Sabbagh R, Sheikh-Taha M (2009) Possible montelukast-induced angioedema. *Am J Health Syst Pharm* 66:1705-6.

Farah R A, Nasser S C, Sabbagh R A, Dina P B, Eid T A (2011) Palliative tumor control by trabectedin in pediatric advanced sarcoma. *Curr Drug Ther* 6:97-9.

Sabbagh Dit Hawasli R, Barton S Nabhani S (2013) Cytotoxic in the academic research setting: A call for tailored guidelines. *Hosp Pharm Eur* Vol.70

Hawasli R S, Kayyali R, Barton S, Osei-Barnieh G, Nabhani-Gebara S (2016) Survey to assess procedures for handling cytotoxic drugs in academic research laboratories in the United Kingdom. *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy: AJHP: Official Journal of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists* 73(1):e59-62.

Biography

Racha Sabbagh Dit Hawasli is a Clinical Pharmacy Graduate from the Lebanese American University. She has worked in community and hospital pharmacy settings before going into research. She is currently a PhD Researcher at Kingston University London, working on the diffusion of innovation in health, more specifically, the feasibility of ambulatory chemotherapy in Lebanon. She expanded her research topic to include occupational exposure to cytotoxic drugs in academic and healthcare settings. Her expertise lies in quantitative and qualitative methodologies and pharmaco-economic modeling as she has conducted several assessments in this context over the past 4 years. She has also established strong connections with experts from the UK in occupational exposure, and is currently working on setting guidelines for the safe handling of cytotoxic drugs in academic research laboratories. She has several publications in international journals, and presented part of her work as posters at two annual meetings for the British Oncology Pharmacy Association (BOPA). She is a member of the International Society of Oncology Pharmacy Practitioners (ISOPP).

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