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Some Aspects of Palliative Medicine Teaching to the VI-Year Students of Medicine Faculty

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Abstract.

The study of oncology in medical schools is very important because whatever a doctor will be in the future, at some point he will have to deal with oncologic patients. Patients with incurable diseases in general and with tumors in particular constitute the majority of patients who need palliative care. Features of this branch of medicine require special training, therefore Palliative Medicine is taught as a separate course of higher medical education program to VI year students of the Medicine Faculty. It is important to draw the students' attention to the study of the basic statements and principles of palliative medicine in the treatment of oncologic patients and to form a clear understanding of the need for palliative care and the ability to determine its scope in patients in case of the impossibility of definitive treatment.



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The study of oncology in medical schools is very important because whatever a doctor will be in the future, at some point he will have to deal with oncologic patients, if not as a doctor, then, in any case, as a person who is knowledgeable in medicine [1]. Steering document does not provide the training of oncologist. However, every doctor should know basic concepts of oncology as a science, as a medical specialty, general principles of assistance to oncologic patients and principles of palliative care in oncology [2, 3].

The issue of palliative surgery is one of the priorities of modern oncology of WHO Cancer Control Program. Taking into account the fact the increase in cancer incidence will remain, the WHO predicts about 70% of registered patients to require palliative therapy [3, 4].

Features of this branch of medicine require special training, therefore Palliative Medicine is taught as a separate course of higher medical education program to VI year students of the Medicine Faculty.

Our aim is to draw the students' attention to the study of the basic statements and principles of palliative medicine in the treatment of oncologic patients and to form a clear understanding of the need for palliative care and the ability to determine its scope in patients in case of the impossibility of definitive treatment.

During the study of Palliative Medicine course students acquire the following skills:

- mastering of the basic principles of palliative care providing to oncologic patients and its organization in the hospital and at home;
- the concept of hospice and basic principles of its work;
- determination of the patient's quality of life and the characteristics of its overall status;
- methods of palliative treatment and palliative care for the oncologic patients at the stage of uncontrolled disease progression;
- study psychological, ethical and legal aspects of palliative care for the oncologic patients and their relatives.

In order to assess the gained knowledge of the elective course, students answer the following questions:

1. What are the basic principles of palliative medical care?
2. Define the fundamental principles of the Venice Declaration.
3. What does the term "the patient's quality of life" mean? What are the modern methods of its determination?
4. Describe the assessment scheme of oncologic patient's general condition according Karnofsky index and ECOG.
5. What is hospice? What are the principles of its work?
6. Provide the examples of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy methods of palliative care use.
7. What methods of palliative treatment and palliative care for the oncologic patients at the stage of uncontrolled disease progression do you know?
8. Describe psychological, ethical and legal aspects of palliative care for the oncologic patients and their relatives.
9. What are the basic rules of communication with patients requiring palliative care?

Having studied the course of Palliative Medicine, students should be able to:

- fill in the necessary accounting records during the provision of palliative care for an oncologic patient;
- determine patient's status according to Karnofsky index and ECOG;
- substantiate the transition to palliative care in case of disease progression;
- determine indications to perform surgery, radiation and chemotherapy methods with palliative purpose;

- demonstrate the knowledge of deontology principles in oncological practice, including the application of communication rules with the patient and his informing about the disease.

Conclusions

The study of Palliative Medicine by VI year students of the Medicine Faculty is very important and essential as a doctor of any specialty will have to deal with oncologic patients at some point. After the course completion students will know the basic principles of palliative medicine.

References

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