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Patient-friendly treatment: A new approach to improve the quality of care in ambulatory

Aaruni Saxena, Faizan Haris, Hassan Shabbir, Tharindra Dissanayake, Sheeren Bhaiyat, Avinash Segaran, Zaheer malik, Elizabeth Levison, and Ciro Rinaldi Pilgrim Hospital, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS trust, United Kingdom

Background: Ambulatory chemotherapy has been often kept on the back foot because of the adverse side effects of the cancer agents. Side effects of a single chemotherapeutic agent are well documented but limited studies are available which provide an overall view of adverse effect for various chemotherapeutic regimes commonly used in the treatment of hematological diseases. This study aims to identify most common side effects of 25 chemotherapeutic regimes used to treat hematological disorders and to improve pre-/post chemotherapy medications making the treatment more patient-friendly with less discomfort.

Methodology: An ongoing prospective cohort study of 50 patients under ambulatory settings was performed. The patients were assessed for the most common side effects post-chemotherapy up to 8 days. The side effects included the occurrence of fever, constipation, diarrhea, vomiting, flu-like symptoms, neuropathy, cough, hematemesis and other significant symptoms.

Result: Interesting results were observed showing constipation, neuropathy, and vomiting as the top most common side effects in around 30 patients. Different combination of the same chemotherapeutic agent with other drugs changed the side effect of the regime.

Conclusion: In the current study, the authors attempted to prioritize the side effects for commonly used chemotherapeutic regimes to improve the quality of care by providing appropriate pre-medication. This included laxatives, antiemetic and multivitamins. The current study identified strategies for prevention of side effects, thereby making ambulatory chemotherapy more patient-friendly. In addition to this, it also provides insight into drug-drug interaction related side effects commonly seen for various chemotherapeutic regimes.

Aaruni.Saxena@nuh.nhs.uk

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