

**387: PROPOSAL OF A NEW OBJECTIVE AND REPRODUCIBLE METHOD FOR PATIENT AND FAMILY EDUCATION IN A RESEARCH AND CANCER CARE CENTRE (EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF ONCOLOGY – MILAN)**

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**Objective:**

The purpose of the study is to create an objective and reproducible tool to evaluate the learning capacity of the patient and/or of the family in order to adjust to the abilities of the patient and/or of the family the teaching methods, and the appropriate techniques, for the management of:

- Drug administration
- Management of devices (i.e., elastomer, stoma management ...)
- Nutrition
- Rehabilitation techniques
- Behaviour/lifestyle
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**Methods:**

To date, there are no data or literature on possible methods to objectively evaluate the capacity of patients' learning. Also, when patients are discharged, the education is often inadequate to the needs of patients themselves. Moreover, the educational activity for patients and/or their family is not documented.

In our Institution, a multidisciplinary group (physician, nutritionist, nurses, physiotherapist, and a quality manager) have focused on the criteria to evaluate the learning capacity by assessing:

- Level of educational attainment
- Level of knowledge of illness
- Willingness to learn
- Stress level
- Previous experience of treatment or self help
- Degree of compliance to therapy and treatment proposals

At the end of the evaluation, each patient (or family, if the patient is not able to learn) will be assigned a score that will provide us with the capacity of learning: high – medium – low capacity. In every Unit of our Institution, the staff elaborated a grid in which techniques are defined on the basis of the degree of difficulty (high – medium – low).

The learning needs and the score are written on another form, in which the staff reports on the teaching methods (brochure, videotapes and demonstration) and on the outcomes of the patients' ability of the health education. In November, the staff of the Division of ENT and Medical Oncology were trained for one month in a pilot phase.

**Results:**

This method was subsequently tested in these two Divisions on 110 patients.

The data analysis has shown:

96% of patients: Learning capacity higher than the difficulty of self-management (e.g. medium capacity – low difficulty)

87% of patients: Learning capacity equal to the difficulty of self-management (e.g. high capacity – high difficulty)

21% of patients: Learning capacity lower than the difficulty of self-management (e.g. medium capacity – high difficulty)

**Conclusions:**

What emerged from the first results is encouraging. This method is user-friendly, and it takes a very short time to fill out the form (3/4 minutes). On the basis of common criteria, this method provides objective data by reducing the degree of subjectivity in the patient's evaluation; it allows the use of language and teaching methodology adequate to the patients, the family and/or care-giver.

A multicentric study using this method is ongoing in 3 institutions: two of them are general hospitals and one is a home care centre.