

Caregiver Role in Adherence in Oral Oncology Care Coordination

Patients may face multiple barriers to be adherent with oral oncology therapies. Examples of barriers include¹⁻⁴:

Physical deficits:

Visual, physical, cognitive, mental illness comorbidities, history of poor medication adherence, and treatment of asymptomatic disease

Social support gaps:

Lack of social or family support, financial limitations, and patient anticipation of adverse events

Therapeutic concerns:

Toxicity, adverse effects, complex regimens, increased dosing frequency, as well as food and drug interactions

Educational needs:

Poor understanding of the benefits of long-term therapy and the consequences of poor adherence

Health care system failures:

Weak doctor-patient relationship and poor communication, limited access to convenient and affordable care, as well as variation in insurance coverage, including:

- Functionally uninsured: Insurance does not cover a medication
- Underinsured: Insurance covers a medication with a high cost-share
- Uninsured: No insurance to help cover the cost of a medication

Caregivers can support cancer treatment patients in the home, doctor's office, or hospital by filling in social support gaps.⁵

Tasks can range from helping organizing medications to researching insurance benefits.

Tools such as a patient health care binder may be helpful for caregivers. Useful information for this tool may include:



As caregivers strive to offer compassionate and efficient support to the patient, they may need some support themselves.

The Caregiver Action Network offers some tips on how caregivers can care for themselves⁶:



Seek support from other caregivers



Take care of their own health



Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help



Take respite breaks often



Watch for signs of depression and get professional help if needed

Key Takeaway

- Patient adherence is dependent upon many factors. Caregivers can support patients through a variety of activities, filling important social gaps

References

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