

# Supportive Care

Supportive Care services are available for patients and families going through treatment and after treatment for cancer. Supportive Care is located on Level 1 of the Walker Family Cancer Centre.

Like many people facing cancer, you and your family may have questions or concerns about:

- your job and finances
- talking to your family and friends about your cancer
- helping young children understand what is happening
- accessing available community and government resources
- managing day-to-day activities
- healthy eating
- coping with weight loss or changes in your appetite
- the pain or symptoms associated with your cancer and its treatment
- feeling worried or sad
- your spiritual or religious needs
- grief and death and dying
- understanding the health care system and how to access necessary resources

We will work with you, your family and your primary team to help identify and respond to your supportive care needs. Based on your needs, you may meet one or more members of the Supportive Care team.

## How to contact Supportive Care

A referral to Supportive Care can be made through your oncologist, primary nurse or radiation therapist. You can also call us:

**905-682-6451 (choose #3)**

**Monday through Friday – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm**

# Supportive Care team members

## Chaplain

The chaplain is available to patients and families whether or not they follow a particular religious belief or tradition. The chaplain is available to:

- listen and offer spiritual guidance and emotional support
- accompany those in crisis or grief
- share prayers

The Spiritual Centre, a place for rest, quiet reflection, prayer and/or mediation. It is located on the Main Floor (Level 1) of the Niagara health System – St. Catharines Site just past the cafeteria and Auxiliary Gift Shop on the left.

## Mental Health Services

For many patients with cancer, the experience can be very difficult. Patients may experience:

- a low mood
- problems sleeping
- tearfulness
- anxious feelings
- panic attacks
- difficulty making decisions
- feeling hopeless

A clinical nurse specialist and psychiatrist provide services to patients experiencing these kinds of difficulties.

## Registered dietitians

Sometimes cancer and/or treatment cause problems with nutrition. Registered dietitians are experts in the nutritional care of patients with cancer. Dietitians can help with:

- problems with appetite and weight loss
- nausea and vomiting
- constipation and diarrhea
- difficulty in swallowing
- special dietary needs
- health eating and weight management

Dietitians help patients in eating as well as possible.

## Social workers

Social workers can help patients and their family members with the emotional, social and practical concerns they may experience in dealing with cancer. Social workers are professionally trained counselors who can provide:

- individual, couple or family counselling
- help with money matters
- help in communicating with the health care team
- information on community resources
- help talking with children
- help with future planning
- help talking about concerns and questions about sexuality and cancer

## **Supportive Care Clinic/Pain and Symptom Management Nurse (by referral)**

The pain and symptom management team, working with your primary cancer team, can help you learn ways to manage pain and symptoms caused by cancer and or treatment such as:

- pain
- constipation
- nausea and vomiting
- fatigue
- depression and anxiety
- shortness of breath
- difficulty in coping

## **Resources and Services**

### **The Patient and Family Resource Centre**

The Patient and Family Resource Centre is located in the main lobby of the Walker Family Cancer Centre (WFCC) just behind the waiting area. The WFCC in partnership with the Canadian Cancer Society and Wellspring provide information and supportive programs for people with cancer. Staff and volunteers are happy to work with you to find any information you need.

To support you along your cancer journey information is provided about:

- diagnosis and treatment
- nutrition, stress management, coping, relaxation techniques
- physical activity, survivorship and more

Computers with internet access are also available for public use. We are more than happy to help you to find more health information on the web.