

CHASE: A Novel Inpatient Rotation for Palliative Medicine Fellows Focusing on Hematologic Malignancies

Rejoy Zachariah MD, Gene DeCastro MD

Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, Department of Medicine
Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell Health, Manhasset, NY, USA



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Objective

To assess and improve clinical competencies for Hospice and Palliative Medicine (HPM) fellowship trainees across multiple domains related to the care of hematologic malignancy patients.

Background

The Discrepancy of Cancer Care

Compared to patients with solid tumor cancers, those with hematologic malignancy (HM) have:

- ↓ Palliative consultations
- ↓ Hospice Use
- ↑ Aggressive treatments at EOL
- ↑ Hospital Deaths

The Impact of Palliative Medicine in HM

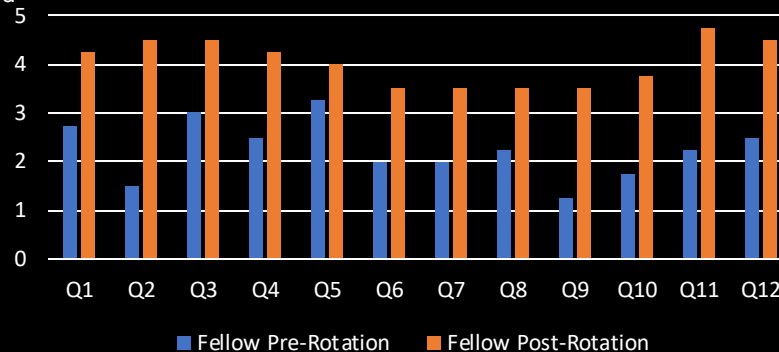
Integrated Palliative & Oncologic Care in HM:

- ↓ Chemotherapy at EOL
- ↓ Depression, Anxiety & PTSD Symptoms
- ↑ Discussion of EOL preferences
- ↑ Quality of Life

The Need to Expand Palliative Cancer Care

- Low rates of Palliative Care & Hospice use among HM patients at EOL
- Discordant views of prognosis between HM patients and their oncologists
- Gap in knowledge of palliative care needs for HM population partly due to ↓ exposure

Survey of Clinical Competencies Before and After CHASE Rotation



Fellows' Highlights of Didactic & Clinical Aspects of Elective

"Working with oncology providers and seeing patients after BMT and CAR T-cell Therapy throughout their post-procedure course"

"Presenting to the team on Follicular Lymphoma and CAR T-Cell therapy"

"Exposure to patients undergoing inpatient chemo and stem cell transplants"

"Opportunities to appreciate the difficulties that HM patients face during their month of treatment"

"Helpful selection of recommended readings; the primer for transplant procedures was the most useful resource for me"

Methods

Curriculum Innovation

- Four HPM fellows, July 2021 – June 2022
- Novel 2-week HPM fellowship rotation: C.H.A.S.E. - Cellular therapies, Hematologic malignancies, And Stem cell transplant Experience
 - Palliative consults - stem cell transplant, cellular therapy & leukemia patients
 - Inverted classroom model
 - Targeted chart reviews
 - Two capstone presentations – lead discussion on specific HM pathology or treatment; address clinical vignette

Survey Research

- Pre-rotation & Post-rotation Survey
- Assessed clinical competencies in knowledge, attitudes, and practice across 12 domains of HM care
- Recorded fellows' most impactful experiences

Results

Survey Research

- All 4 fellows completed pre/post surveys
- Substantial increase across most domains
- ↑ exposure to HM patient populations
- ↑ familiarity with diagnosis & prognosis
- ↑ knowledge of disease & treatment-related symptom burden, treatment indications, adverse effects, and patient/caregiver reported outcomes

Addressing Gaps in HM Knowledge

- Disease specific capstones: Multiple Myeloma, Follicular Lymphoma, Acute Promyelocytic Leukemia, and Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma (DLBCL)
- Clinical Vignettes: Indications for Palifermin in autologous/allogeneic stem cell Transplants; Comparison of International Prognostic Indices for DLBCL; Impact of platelet transfusions at the end of life; Treatment of chemo-induced dysgeusia.

Discussion & Take Home Points

- Development of the palliative workforce to better care for HM population is paramount
- The CHASE rotation for HPM fellows enhances exposure & cultivates expertise in HM care
- Broader adoption of this 2-week HPM curriculum can foster greater access to palliative care for HM patients and valuable education for fellows

Citations

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