

Poster # 2053

Unmet supportive care needs of patients with hematological or digestive cancer and their caregivers at the beginning of cancer care

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Introduction

Cancer not only affects patients, but also their relatives, especially the natural caregivers who provide significant support.

It is important to **identify the unmet supportive care needs (SCN) of patients and caregivers** to help them improve their adjustment and quality of life.

It is possible that **solid and hematological cancers** lead to different SCN, as they involve **major differences** in care and consequences for patients and caregivers (Tsatsou et al., 2021).

Thus, it seems important to compare their unmet SCN from the beginning of cancer care to adjust recommendations.

Objectives

1. Compare the levels of unmet SCN of patients and their natural caregivers at the beginning of care according to the type of cancer (hematological or gastrointestinal cancer).
2. Describe the 5 most unmet SCN of patients and caregivers.

Methods

- ❖ 5 cancer centers in France.
- ❖ A cross-sectional, quantitative and observational study by **self-report questionnaire** using:
 - the SCN Survey for patients (SCNS-SF, Brédart, et al., 2012), 34 items, 5 scores.
 - the SCN Survey for partners and caregivers (SCNS-P&C, Baudry, et al., 2019), 41 items, 4 scores.
- ❖ Main inclusion criteria:
 - ≥ 18 years
 - Primary cancer (gastrointestinal or hematological cancer),
 - The **initial phase of care** (< 6 months of diagnosis) and under **chemotherapy**.
- ❖ The patients designated their main natural caregiver.

Results

316 patient-caregiver dyads were included, with **59% of gastrointestinal cancer**.

Objective 1:

No significant difference (T-Student, $p > .05$) in unmet SCN scores according to the type of cancer for patients and caregivers (Table 1).

Objective 2:

The 5 most frequently unmet SCN (Table 2) were related to

- **Psychological experience** (i.e. related to emotions and coping) for patients
- **Health care service and information** (i.e. focused on the patient's care and support) for caregivers

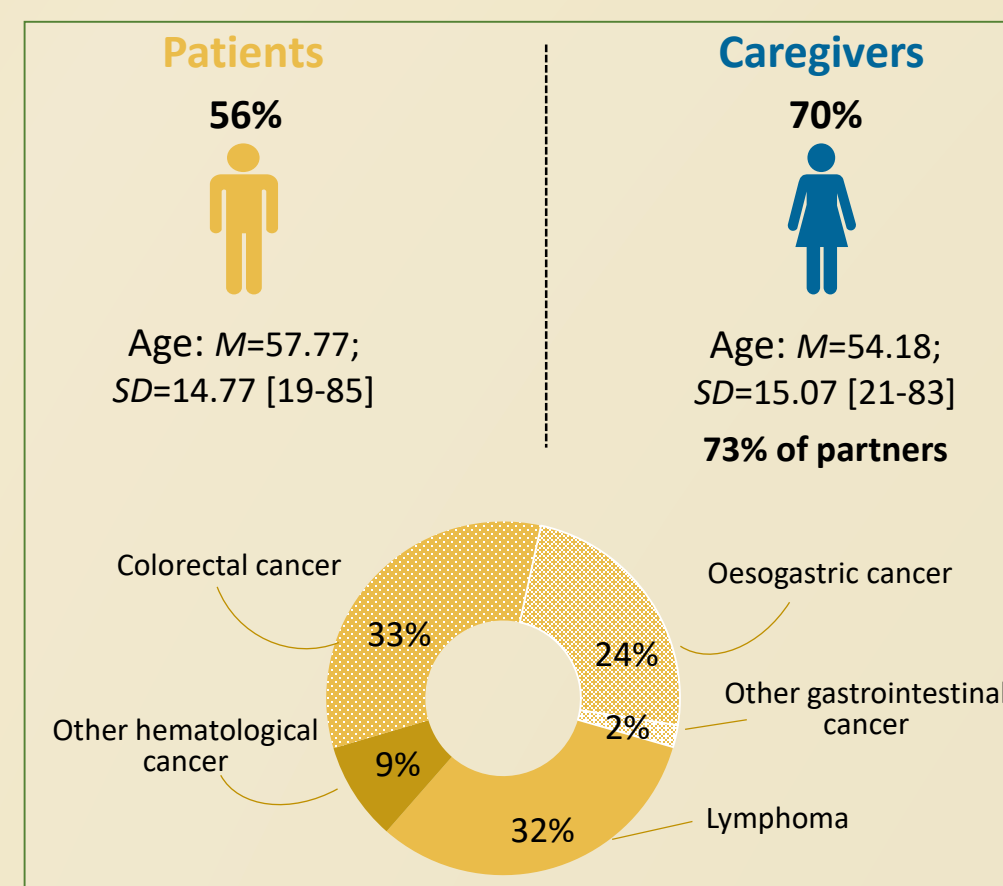


Table 1. Comparaison of the unmet SCN scores of the patients and caregivers according to the type of cancer

	Hematological cancer (N=131)			Gastrointestinal cancer (N=185)			p-value*
	N	Mean (SD)	Range	N	Mean (SD)	Range	

Unmet SCN of patients SCNS Questionnaire [1-4]

	N	Mean (SD)	Range	N	Mean (SD)	Range	p-value*
Care and support	110	1.24 (0.50)	1.00;4.00	147	1.38 (0.61)	1.00;3.60	0.057
Health system and information	112	1.44 (0.62)	1.00;3.90	147	1.41 (0.63)	1.00;3.82	0.686
Physical and Daily living	109	1.62 (0.68)	1.00;3.75	146	1.74 (0.80)	1.00;4.00	0.207
Psychological	111	1.81 (0.72)	1.00;3.40	147	1.89 (0.84)	1.00;4.00	0.430
Sexuality	106	1.75 (0.89)	1.00;4.00	140	1.71 (0.89)	1.00;4.00	0.734

Unmet SCN of caregivers SCNS-P&C Questionnaire [1-4]

	N	Mean (SD)	Range	N	Mean (SD)	Range	p-value*
Health Care Service and information	91	1.95 (0.83)	1.00;3.83	110	1.78 (0.81)	1.00;4.00	0.131
Psychological and emotional	90	1.64 (0.62)	1.00;3.56	109	1.58 (0.65)	1.00;3.25	0.550
Work and Social Security	90	1.57 (0.72)	1.00;4.00	109	1.44 (0.67)	1.00;3.50	0.200
Communication and Family support	90	1.50 (0.87)	1.00;4.00	109	1.40 (0.78)	1.00;4.00	0.365

Reference

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Table 2. The five most unmet SCN of patients and caregivers

Rank	Items	N	%
Patients (N=258)			
1	Concerns about the worries of those close to you	149	58.43
2	Uncertainty about the future	148	58.04
3	Fears about the cancer spreading	146	57.03
4	Worry that the results of the treatment are beyond your control	136	53.54
5	Learning to feel in control of your situation	134	52.34
Caregivers (N=201)			
1	Having opportunities to discuss your concerns with the doctors	105	53.03
2	Accessing information about the benefits and side-effects of treatments	104	52.00
3	Accessing information on what the person with cancer's physical needs are likely to be	102	51.00
4	Addressing fears about the person with cancer's physical or mental deterioration	46	50.55
5	Accessing information about the person with cancer's prognosis, or likely outcome	99	49.01

Worries about relatives
Worries about the future (uncertainty, recurrence)
Need to control

Discuss with professionals
Obtain more information

Discussion

- ❖ The **type of cancer does not seem to influence the level of unmet SCN** of patients and natural caregivers at the beginning of cancer care.
- ❖ More attention should be paid to **psychological support for patients**.
 - They need more support to **manage the worries** of their relatives and their own worries related to the future. These unmet SCN often are the most frequently reported moderate-to-high unmet needs (Beesley, et al., 2016).
 - The **feeling of control** seems to be one of their main concerns, requiring additional support.
- ❖ Caregivers should be **more closely involved in patient care**. It is essential for them to exchange more with professionals and to be better informed, with a significant prevalence of unmet SCN related to health care service and information needs, as previously showed (Christophe, et al., 2022).

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