

Breaking Barriers : Pioneering Psychosocial Support in Oncology within Emerging Economies

FATMA BEN ABID 1, LINA ALAMI 1, AMINE SOUADKA 2, IKRAM NEJJAR 1, KENZA BACHOUCHI 1, DOUNIA FILALI BENACEUR 1, LATIFA MESBAH 1, SIHAM LEMSANES 1, YASSER ASMAI 1, FAHD EL ABDI 1, MOUNIR BACHOUCHI 1

1 CLINIQUE D'ONCOLOGIE 16 NOVEMBRE, RABAT, MAROC - 2 INSTITUT NATIONAL D'ONCOLOGIE, UNIVERSITE MOHAMMED V, RABAT, MAROC

ABSTRACT

Introduction: the landscape of emerging and low-income countries, supportive care in oncology is often a neglected aspect. Responding to this gap, Clinique d'Oncologie 16 Novembre in Rabat, Morocco, launched an innovative psychosocial supportive care program in December 2020. This pilot initiative redefined the hospital setting, introducing free, holistic well-being programs such as art therapy, yoga, choir, meditation, Ikebana, and sophrology. The objective was to transform the hospital from a solely treatment-centric environment to a holistic care space, thus humanizing the patient experience in cancer care.

Materials and Methods: Adapting to the resource constraints typical in emerging countries, the program repurposed existing spaces within the clinic to facilitate various psychosocial activities. Local artists and wellness experts, volunteering their time, led weekly sessions across diverse artistic and therapeutic disciplines. These sessions were structured to be inclusive, catering to patients with varying abilities and interests. Artwork created in these workshops not only boosted patient morale but also served as a means for fundraising, supporting the continuity and diversification of the program. Activities such as yoga, sophrology, and choir were integrated, enriching the patient's experience and broadening the program's scope.

Results: Engaging over 50 patients, the program demonstrated high acceptance, with a participant demographic predominantly female (70%) and age ranging from 21 to 82 years. Most participants (80%) resonated with the program's philosophy, with 70% undergoing active treatment and 25% in palliative care. The program faced challenges like transportation and illness progression but also witnessed the evolution of 8 patients into 'patient partners'. These partners played a crucial role in mentoring new participants and aiding in the program's administration, exemplifying a successful model of patient-led initiative in a clinical setting.

Conclusion: This pilot project showcases the successful implementation of a cost-effective, psychosocial supportive care model in an emerging country. The transformative impact of this initiative went beyond traditional care, fostering a sense of community, enhancing patient engagement, and positively influencing the overall effectiveness of cancer treatment and supportive therapies. The study presents a replicable model for holistic cancer care, emphasizing the importance of patient-centered approaches in improving treatment experiences and outcomes in oncology.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the landscape of emerging and low-income countries, supportive care in oncology is often a neglected aspect. Responding to this gap, **Clinique d'Oncologie 16 Novembre** in Rabat, Morocco, launched an innovative psychosocial supportive care program in December 2020. Adapting to the resource constraints, this pilot initiative repurposed existing spaces within the clinic to facilitate introducing free, holistic well-being programs such as art therapy, yoga, choir, meditation, Ikebana, and sophrology. Local artists and wellness experts, volunteering their time, led weekly sessions across diverse artistic and therapeutic disciplines. The objective was **to transform the hospital from a solely treatment-centric environment to a holistic care space**, thereby humanizing the patient experience in cancer care.

2 METHODS AND MATERIALS

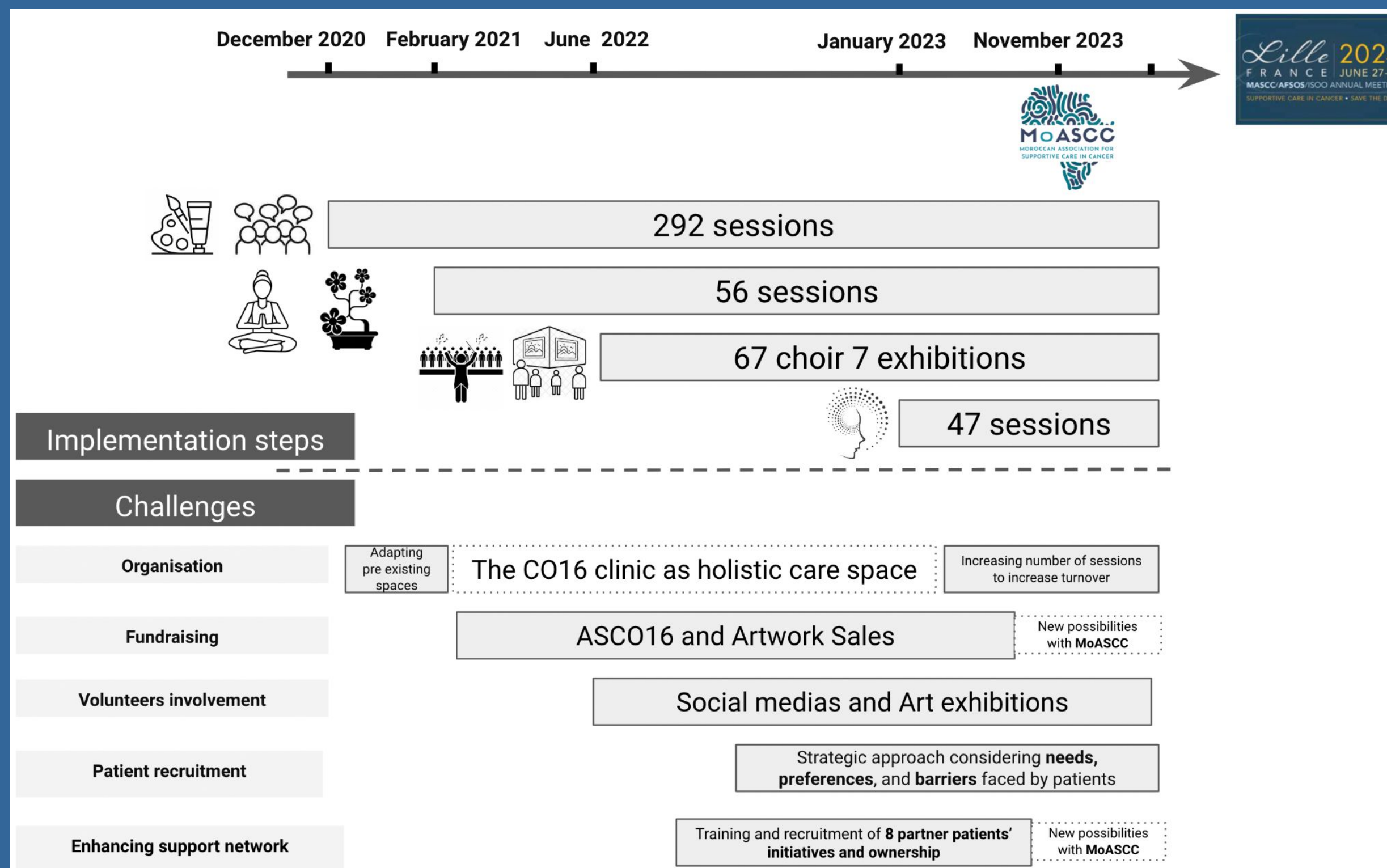
Sessions were structured to be inclusive, adapted to patients with varying abilities and interests with a progressive increase in the number of sessions and participants.



[Our Website](#)

3 RESULTS

N patients: 50 - Female rate: 70% / Age : 21 to 82 y / Active treatment: 70% / Palliative care: 25%



4 CONCLUSION

PERSPECTIVES

National involvement of public and private settings

CONCLUSION

This pilot project showcases the **successful implementation of a cost-effective, psychosocial supportive care model in an emerging country**. The transformative impact of this initiative went beyond traditional care, fostering a sense of community, enhancing patient engagement, and positively influencing the overall effectiveness of cancer treatment and supportive therapies.



SCAN ME



90% Satisfaction



80% Participation



8 Partner Patients