Distress Screening & Psychosocial Management of Adult Cancer Patients

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NOTE: For any positive response to the question: “Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself in some way?” refer to the Suicide Risk Assessment algorithm.

Patient screened for distress at specified time points (new patient visit, EC visit, within 24 hours of admission) (See NOTE above)

- Has nurse submitted referral order to Social Work?
  - Yes: Social Work completes psychosocial assessment
  - No: Primary Team to identify any psychosocial needs

- PNA \(^1\) distress score of 4 or more?
  - Yes: Consult order required? (See Appendix A & B)
    - Yes: Referral service follows-up with Primary Team as appropriate
    - No: Patient referred or connected to additional psychosocial resources/services
  - No: Physical, emotional, spiritual, and patient/family needs identified and documented.

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1. PNA = Patient Needs Assessment [Based on distress question: Please choose the number (0-10) that best describes how much distress you have been experiencing in the past week, including today.]

2. Additional time points may include:
   - Initiation of any new treatment
   - Pre-surgical and postsurgical visits
   - Transfer to ICU
   - Transitions during treatment (such as transitions from chemotherapy to radiation therapy, off treatment, to survivorship or to hospice.)
   - At any other time when, in the opinion of the clinical practitioner, reassessment is indicated.
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APPELLIX A: Services – Consult Order Required and Not Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consult Order Required</th>
<th>No Consult Order Required</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body Image Therapy Service</td>
<td>Case Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer-related Fatigue Clinic</td>
<td>Children’s Cancer Hospital Support Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Cancer Hospital Consultation Services</td>
<td>Integrated Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative Medicine Individual Clinical Services</td>
<td>Integrative Medicine Group Clinical Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuropsychology</td>
<td>Learning Center (TLC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oncofertility Clinic</td>
<td>MyCancerConnection/Volunteer Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain Management Center</td>
<td>Patient Advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
<td>Patient Guest Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Medicine Clinic</td>
<td>Spiritual Care and Education</td>
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<td>Sleep Lab</td>
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### APPENDIX B: Service Descriptions and Needs Addressed

<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
| Body Image Therapy Service (Cancer Prevention Center) | The Body Image Therapy Service provides individual counseling, couples counseling, group therapy, and workshops for patients and families to address difficulties patients have coping with body image and appearance changes that result from cancer and its treatment. Individual and couples counseling are currently available for any patient being treated at MD Anderson Cancer Center. **Special programs include:**
  - Head and Neck Cancer Support Group (Inpatient)
  - NFOSD Group (National Foundation of Swallowing Disorders Group)
  - Love Your Body Day Health Fair and Patient Fashion Show |
| Cancer-related Fatigue Clinic (Internal Medicine Center) | The Cancer-Related Fatigue Clinic provides a global medical evaluation for patients receiving cancer therapy or patients who have completed cancer therapy and have fatigue related to their cancer experience. The clinical assessment includes the utilization of symptom tools to assess multiple symptoms (depression, anxiety, sleep dysfunction, pain, etc.) and evaluation of the total symptom burden, a history and physical examination, and review of necessary laboratory and other diagnostic testing. The etiology of fatigue is often multifactorial and may require several recommendations to appropriately reduce fatigue levels. Exercise is usually a mainstay of treatment in cancer-related fatigue. Other interventions may include medications such as stimulants, behavioral modification therapy, and appropriate treatment of other medical and mood disorders. Some patients may require referrals to other specialties. Each patient is educated regarding aspects of cancer-related fatigue and receives a cancer-related fatigue educational book, providing further information and links to other learning resources. Patients are usually referred by their physicians. |
| Case Management | The Department of Case Management coordinates continuum of care needs, through referrals, for patients and families in need of discharge services. We also collaborate with insurance companies to provide clinical information to obtain authorization for inpatient admission stays. Discharge Services include:
  - Home Health, Hospice
  - Nursing Home or Long Term Care placement
  - Inpatient and/or outpatient rehabilitation
  - Discharge equipment and infusion services. |

*List of Needs by Service – continued on next page*
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| **Children’s Cancer Hospital Consultation Services and Support Programs** | The Children's Cancer Hospital offers adult services to: young adult cancer patients, long term pediatric cancer survivors, and adult patients seeking parenting guidance.  
**The Children’s Cancer Hospital Consultation Services include:**  
● Young Adult Fertility Consultation  
● Clinical Psychology Services, including psychotherapy  
● Young Adult Psychiatric Services.  
**Neuropsychological Assessment of cognitive abilities and educational achievement (for adults with developmentally-based intellectual disability and long-term pediatric cancer survivors)**  
**The Children’s Cancer Hospital Support Programs include:**  
● Vocational Assessment of values, interests, and abilities related to post-secondary educational pursuits and Career Counseling  
● Young Adult Life Specialist Services, including procedural support, a weekly support group, and activities/resources throughout hospitalization.  
● Young Adult Secondary Education and Creative Arts Programs  
**Additional Resources include:**  
● Child Visitation Rooms, a family-centered service in which healthy children are supervised within a designated area by hospital staff, freeing the parent to negotiate other hospital/health related responsibilities.  
● Kim’s Place, a young adult lounge and recreational area. |
| **Integrated Ethics**                         | The Ethics Consultation Service is available to assist those who are facing ethically significant decisions regarding medical treatment, patient care, or protocol participation. Many of these decisions involve moral values, deeply held beliefs, and/or professional duties or guidelines that can come into conflict. We can help facilitate good communication and shared decision-making when assistance with these concerns is requested. Clinical Ethicists are available to help address ethical questions that arise when the right thing to do is not clear or when disagreement exists about what is best for a patient. We assist patients, families, and healthcare teams to identify and resolve specific ethical issues so that the individuals responsible for decisions can make informed choices. An Ethicist can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for clinical ethics consultation. Main Office: (713) 792-8775 or Pager: (713) 404-2863. There is no charge for an ethics consultation. |
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| **Integrative Medicine Center** | The Integrative Medicine Center provides a variety of group and individual clinical services that engage patients and their families to become active participants in improving their physical, psycho-spiritual and social health. The ultimate goals are to optimize health, quality of life and clinical outcomes through personalized evidence-based clinical care, exceptional research and education.  
**Individual clinical services include:**  
● Integrative oncology physician consultation  
● Nutrition consultation  
**Group clinical programs include:**  
● Expressive art classes  
● Meditation  
For more information call 713-794-4700. |
| **Learning Center (TLC)** | The Learning Center is a free consumer health library that offers information about cancer prevention, cancer treatment, coping and general health. The Learning Center staff can answer your questions and respond via email at asktlcstaff@mdanderson.org or visit the website at www.mdanderson.org/tlc; Theodore N. Law Learning Center, Main Building, Floor 4, near Elevator A, Room R4.1100 or Levit Family Learning Center, Mays Clinic, Floor 2, near The Tree sculpture Room ACB2.1120. |
| **MyCancerConnection/Volunteer Services** | MyCancerConnection offers hope, support and understanding to patients, caregivers and family members from those who have been there. At diagnosis, treatment, recurrence or anytime during the cancer journey, they can match with another survivor, thereby providing a personalized support connection from someone who has had the same experience.  
**Other programs include:**  
● The Cancer Survivorship Conference offering education and fellowship;  
● PIKNIC, a lunch and learn;  
● Hospitality Centers in Main and Mays staffed by survivor and caregiver volunteers who offer support in a relaxing atmosphere;  
For additional information see www.mdanderson.org/mycancerconnection. |

**List of Needs by Service – continued on next page**
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<tr>
<td>Neuropsychology (Brain and Spine Center)</td>
<td>The Section of Neuropsychology provides cognitive assessment and interventions for adult patients. Neuropsychological assessment is typically recommended when there are symptoms or complaints involving memory or other thinking skills, or changes in behavior, such as changes in concentration, organization, reasoning, memory, language, perception, coordination, or personality. These changes may be due to a variety of medical, neurological, psychological, or genetic causes. <strong>Neuropsychological assessment can:</strong> identify cognitive strengths and weaknesses; differentiate among illnesses and assist in treatment planning; establish a “baseline” that is objectively measured in order to identify subsequent changes; provide driving evaluations and assist in determination of other safety concerns; assist in capacity determination; and be used to plan neuropsychological interventions. Neuropsychological interventions offer management and intervention strategies for patients, caregivers, and the treatment team to maximize function and quality of life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Oncofertility Clinic (Gynecologic Oncology Center) (See also Fertility Preservation algorithm) | The Oncofertility Clinic provides rapid, streamlined access to fertility services for our reproductive-age patients with cancer. **Services include:**  
- Fertility education and counseling prior to cancer Treatment  
- Assessment of fertility status  
- Fertility preservation options including egg freezing, embryo freezing, ovarian tissue freezing and sperm banking  
- Assistance with trying to conceive after cancer treatment  
- Exploration of alternative options for family building, including donor egg, donor sperm and adoption  
- Referral to psychological and financial support services  
- Collaboration and communication with your oncologist |
| Pain Management Center (See also Cancer Pain algorithm) | The Pain Management Center sees outpatients at MD Anderson’s main campus and has recently expanded outpatient services to the Regional Care Centers in Katy, Sugar Land and the Bay Area. We also provide consultation services to adjust treatment plans for inpatients that experience pain related to their underlying disease. Optimum pain control is achieved by:  
- Formulating an individualized treatment plan specific to each patient's needs  
- Using a combination of pain management strategies such as non-pharmacologic methods, pharmacotherapy, nerve blocks, implants and other procedural pain management techniques, including vertebroplasty  
- Practicing the continuum of care, beginning with a comprehensive assessment  
- Frequent reassessment to adjust treatment plans when necessary  
- A multidisciplinary approach involving professionals from various disciplines, including psychiatry, neurosurgery and interventional radiology |
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<td>Patient Advocacy</td>
<td>Patient Advocates serve as a liaison between patients and MD Anderson Cancer Center. A Patient Advocate is assigned to every new patient to ensure all concerns are addressed in a professional, caring manner. Patient Advocacy provides: • An opportunity, in a confidential setting, for patients and families to voice a complaint, concern, problem or request, and seek a resolution. • Information about resources and services available to patients and families. • Education about Patient Rights and Responsibilities. Patient Advocacy is responsible for the effective operation of our patient grievance process, including the review and resolution of patient grievances. The Center of Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) requires that hospitals acknowledge and respond, in writing, to all patient grievances. The President of MD Anderson Cancer Center has delegated this responsibility of reviewing and resolving grievances to the Department of Patient Advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Guest Relations</td>
<td>The Patient Guest Relations is a unique department that serves as a liaison for Rotary House guests. We offer our services to any patient of MD Anderson. Our programs and activities are meant to relieve the anxiety of patients and caregivers, as well as serve as a distraction from the rigors of their daily schedules. <strong>Special programs:</strong> • Care 4 the Caregiver Group and Well Wives Support Group • Chair massages • Beauty makeovers • Bingo nights, movie nights, and classes • Origami classes We host a variety of musical and entertainment programs; our celebration of special occasions brings a “home away from home” feeling to our patients and their caregivers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
<td>The Department of Psychiatry provides assessment and management of cancer-related behavioral symptoms and disorders, and neuropsychiatric side effects of cancer and its treatment in patients of all ages, and at all points of disease trajectory. Anxiety, depressive spectrum disorders, and delirium are priorities. Management of primary psychiatric disorders is not a focus of the department but may be provided in certain clinical settings. A limited amount of work is done in management of cancer-related emotional distress in caregivers. Treatment involves psychotherapy, medication, or both, and is coordinated with care provided by allied services. Inpatient care and emergency outpatient care are provided by the department’s adult and child psychiatry consultation services, which are available 24/7. Outpatient assessment and care is provided in the Psychiatric Oncology Center which also offers specialty expertise in pediatric psycho-oncology, substance abuse assessment, and sexual dysfunction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>The Department of Rehabilitation Services provides client-centered therapy using the disciplines of Occupational and Physical Therapy. Rehabilitation services provide therapy to increase engagement in client-identified activities and client-centered programming for increased independence in the performance of everyday activities. The therapist and client work together to identify strategies that allow for compensation of cognitive or physical impairments in everyday life. The department also provides specific programming for the management of lymphedema, fatigue and/or chemo-brain in daily living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Medicine Clinic (Genitourinary Center)</td>
<td>The Sexual Medicine Clinic provides care to all male patients who may have sexual dysfunction or infertility related to their cancers, cancer treatment, or any other etiology. We offer a comprehensive penile rehabilitation program catering to men who will have or have had radical prostatectomy, radical cystectomy and any other pelvic surgeries such as surgeries for rectal cancer, sarcoma or pelvic bone cancers. Men who have received pelvic radiation or systemic chemotherapy can also benefit from our penile rehabilitation program. We have dedicated nurses and an experienced team of mid-level providers on our service who are easily accessible and eager to assist. Moreover, we collaborate with our psychologists and psychotherapists at MD Anderson to provide counseling for couples with special needs. The sexual medicine service is devoted to the restoration of the patient’s sexual function, thereby enhancing their qualities of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sleep Lab</td>
<td>In the sleep clinic and sleep lab; Pulmonologists evaluate and manage the effects of cancer and cancer treatment on patients with disordered sleep and cancer-related fatigue. This usually takes place with a consult to the Pulmonologist. After an evaluation by the Pulmonologist further interventions or testing is determined. This may result in an overnight sleep study for our patients. The evaluation and subsequent sleep study, if needed, are performed several days apart.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Social Work                   | As members of an interdisciplinary team, Social Work staff provides comprehensive psychosocial services to patients within their assigned services. Social work counselors provide:  
  - Individual and Family Counseling  
  - Education, Support, and Discussion Groups  
  - Patient, Caregiver, and Family Education  
  - Advance Directive Assistance  
  - Resource Information and Referral  
  - Community Outreach and Education  
  - Special Services and Programs, for example, Adult Memorial Service  
  - Advance Care Planning  
  - Education  
  - Triage to Psychiatry, Spiritual Care and Education, and other support services  
  - Counseling  
  - Psychosocial Consultation  
Social Work functions include:  
  - Psychosocial Assessments  
  - Information and Referral  
  - Community Outreach and Education  
  - Advance Care Planning  
  - Triage to Psychiatry, Spiritual Care and Education, and other support services  
  - Psychosocial Consultation |

List of Needs by Service – continued on next page
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Care and Education</strong></td>
<td>For many people, cancer is more than just a disease - it’s a test of faith. Chaplains can help to find or reaffirm a belief in God or a Higher Power as part of the healing process. MD Anderson chaplains are here to guide patients on their spiritual journey, whatever path it may take. We nurture and re-kindle the spiritual resources of patients and caregivers and help them to connect with healthy spiritual traditions and communities. Chaplains support patients and caregivers in a manner that is inclusive of all spiritual traditions and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services also include:</strong></td>
<td>- Education and Support groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Sacramento and rituals and local contacts for a specific faith tradition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supportive Care Program</strong></td>
<td>The Supportive Care Program focuses on improving the quality of life for patients with cancer and their families by reducing the physical and emotional burdens of illness through expert use of symptom management, supportive counseling and advance care planning. There are two main components to the program: The Outpatient Supportive Care Center for patient consultation and follow up which runs multiple templates per day and four Mobile Consulting Teams for provision of consultations and follow up care to hospitalized adults, children and adolescents. Palliative care interdisciplinary team members are specially trained experts in this specialized area of medicine and work closely with the primary team to best support the patient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tobacco Treatment Program (Cancer Prevention Center)</strong></td>
<td>The Tobacco Treatment Program provides tobacco cessation treatment services to MD Anderson patients, patients’ family members who live in the home with the patient, and employees.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Services include:</strong></td>
<td>- Assessment of tobacco use history</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Psychiatric disorders and symptoms</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Counseling and pharmacotherapy treatments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>For MD Anderson patients, we will provide assessment and treatment of psychiatric disorders by an addictions psychiatrist if disorders/symptoms pose barriers to tobacco cessation. Counseling is provided by mental health specialists with expertise in the treatment of tobacco addiction disorders. Services are free of charge.</td>
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*List of Needs by Service – continued on next page*
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**SUGGESTED READINGS**


**Suggested Readings – continued on next page**
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DEVELOPMENT CREDITS

This practice consensus algorithm is based on majority expert opinion of the Psychosocial Council at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. It was developed using a multidisciplinary approach that included input from the following faculty and caregivers:

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