Meaningful engagement of people living with cancer in their care

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Track: Allied Health
Theme: Treatment

ABSTRACT

Meaningful engagement of people living with cancer (PLWC) is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone for improving patient outcomes and healthcare quality. This abstract highlights the critical components of meaningful engagement through the application of the WHO Framework on Meaningful Engagement (2023), emphasizing its relevance within the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR). Comprehensive analysis demonstrates how culturally sensitive, integrated approaches significantly enhance patient experiences by addressing spiritual and emotional needs, promoting self-management, and supporting holistic wellness strategies. Effective redistribution of power, underscored by enhanced provider-patient communication and shared decision-making, empowers patients and families, although engagement in research governance remains limited due to ethical concerns and insufficient incentive structures. Capacity-building initiatives, including patient education and digital engagement tools, play a crucial role in bridging knowledge gaps, thereby facilitating informed participation in care. Furthermore, targeted storytelling and culturally tailored interventions effectively mitigate stigma, fostering greater community and healthcare system integration. Institutionalizing patient governance through committees and integrating patient voices into policy-making represent critical steps toward sustainable engagement. Nonetheless, substantial gaps remain, particularly regarding sustainable financing mechanisms to support continuous engagement practices. This synthesis underscores the interconnected nature of engagement enablers and highlights the necessity for comprehensive, patient-centered approaches to optimize cancer care delivery and patient well-being in the EMR.

Keywords: Meaningful engagement, cancer care, patient empowerment, cultural sensitivity, WHO framework