CDA Oasis

Keeping Canadian Dentists Informed

Optimizing Communication with MDs

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TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

1. **Gather as Much Information as Possible**
    - As part of the patient's healthcare team it is important you have an updated medical history that includes all the necessary information to optimize their care. This may include:
        i. Previous or current history of radiation dose and location
        ii. Previous or current history of chemotherapy type and cycle
        iii. Previous or current history of timing of bone marrow transplant
2. **Be Specific**
    - Having specific answers to questions pre-treatment is extremely important as there may be contraindications
3. **Know the RIGHT questions to ask**
    - Does the patient need antibiotics before treatment?
    - Is the patient ACTIVELY undergoing treatment?
    - If so, do they have a central line (this could be a Hickman Line, PICC, or a PORT)?
    - How often are they having their complete blood count checked? You should have the patient provide you with the most recent counts so you can review. Important values to review include: Hemoglobin, platelets, white blood cells and neutrophils
4. **The Patient's Oncology Team**
    - Ask the patient who is part of their team so you can reach out to the right people
5. **Reach Out**
    - Reach out to the medical team to find out how the physician prefers to communicate:
        - Letter
        - Fax
        - Email
        - Set up a time to speak with physician directly
6. **Make it Easy**
    - Make it as easy as possible for the physician to understand what you want and for them to respond to you – GET TO THE POINT.
    - Be SIMPLE in your letter - ask relevant questions with yes/no response options, especially if this is in written form