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Role of point of care pharmacist in patient receiving oral chemotherapeutic agents

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Background: Oral chemotherapeutic agents have been conceptualized as a convenient, less toxic form of therapy that is preferred by the patients. However, many safety issues related to chemotherapeutic agents are appreciated. Safety issues which include lack of check and balance to avoid medication errors, drug interactions, side effects, administration issues, lack of patient adherence and shift of responsibility for managing a potential complicated oral regimen from oncologists, nurses and pharmacists to the patient and caregivers. As a result of these factors oncology pharmacist can be utilized as point of care pharmacist (PCP) and can be consulted to identify drug related problems (DRPs) and to provide patient counseling.

Objectives: To evaluate the 1) role of point of care pharmacist (PCP) service provided to the patients receiving oral chemotherapeutic agents 2) Number of DRPs identified by the PCP and 3) Type of recommendations made for management of DRPs.

Study design: This is prospective observational study. PCP can help the patient with everything to get the oral chemotherapy to start and provides the cost estimate for insurance, corporate and self-payers. PCP can help in designing standard order forms for oral chemotherapeutic agents which includes all the information including diagnosis, cycle number and body surface area and dosing calculations. PCP met with patient receiving oral chemotherapeutic agents and takes the patient medication

history (PMH), check for drug-drug, drug-food interactions and provides patient counseling and patient education materials. Complete pre and post counseling questionnaire to capture the understanding of their oral chemotherapeutic agents.

Methodology: PCP Receives Protocol → Provide Cost Estimate → Medication Procurement → PCP Receives Consult → Pre-Counseling Questionnaire → PCP Completes PMH, Interaction Checking, Counseling & Providing Patient Education Materials → Post Counseling Questionnaire → Recommendations

Intended outcomes: The intended outcomes are as follows: Peace of mind for physicians, nurses and patients by expert support from point of care pharmacist, standard order forms for oral chemotherapy in order to keep the cycle track, reducing medication errors by multiple checking of order forms from oncologists, PCP and nurses, helps in resolving tough administration issues e.g. IV to oral switching, can be crushed or not, can be given through nasogastric tubes, extemporaneous compounding options etc., identifies drug interactions, communicate to oncologists and document the recommendations, reduction in DRPs and to improve understanding of oral chemotherapy by the patients.

Conclusion: The study will suggest that the consult service of PCP for oral chemotherapeutic agent is beneficial and should be continued.

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