

Patient scenarios; IUG palliative care course

Patient scenario 1

Adulatif is a 55 year old businessman has been having severe back pain for some months radiating down his left leg. He has been having treatment for a possible herniated disc lesion as he has longstanding lumbar disc problems. He has been unable to continue with his business and is not sleeping well at night. His son is about to leave Gaza for Germany on a IT Masters scholarship, but he has his wife and 3 younger daughters at home. Now he also has a sudden pain and loss of movement in his upper left arm. His x-rays are suggestive of a humeral fracture and a diagnosis of multiple myeloma and this is confirmed by the presence of a paraprotein in this blood work up. He is waiting to see the oncologists but comes to you because of the pain.

1. What are the probable causes of the pain or pains? be specific
2. Write a holistic problem list
3. What is your initial management plan?

Focal session

Pain assessment and initial management

Patient scenario 2

Mohamed is 11 years old from Khan Younis and has relapsed CLL. He has travelled outside Gaza with his elderly grandmother for treatment. He is being re-evaluated for further treatment at Al Rantisi hospital. He is reluctant to travel outside Gaza again. He is also very scared of needles and injections and is refusing to allow cannulation. His family are very anxious. When we ask Mohamed he wants to know if he will ever get well again.

1. What are the probable causes of the symptoms? be specific
2. Write a holistic problem list
3. What is your initial management plan?

Discussion and learning

Procedural pain

Family perception and understanding

Communication with children/young people

Social impact

Focal session

Communication simulation

Patient scenario 3

Ahmed is a 76 year old gentleman with diabetes controlled for 10 years with oral medication and diet and now has vascular disease including renal failure, ischaemic heart disease and congestive heart failure. He had several admissions in the last year with chest pain and fluid overload. He is increasingly frail and at times confused and needs help with every daily activity spending increasing amounts of time in bed or in a chair. His grandchildren love spending time with him and are his main carers along with his daughters. He is asking whether it is worth going back into hospital if he get worse and says 'let me be with my family'. His daughters are worried about him.

1. What are the possible causes of the symptoms? be specific
2. Write a holistic problem list
3. What is your initial management plan?

Discussion and learning

Pain assessment and management

Confusion assessment and management

Multi-morbidity

End stage renal and cardiac disease

Focal session

Multimorbidity and goals of care

Patient scenario 4

Mariam is a 62 year old lady with carcinoma of the rectum. She received radical radiotherapy for the tumour 18 months ago and was doing well though her husband died 1 year ago. She now presents requesting help with pain and symptom control. She has a severe burning pain in the rectal region which is constant and also pain on passing stool which is intermittent and described as a spasm-type pain. She has become extremely constipated as it is so painful for her to pass stool. Her CT scan shows extensive pelvic disease recurrence and liver metastases. She is asking about her scan results but her son is insisting that she is not told the cancer is has recurred.

1. What are the probable causes of the symptoms? be specific
2. Write a holistic problem list
3. What is your initial management plan?

Discussion and learning

Pain assessment and management; tenesmus

Constipation and nausea

Communication and collusion.

Focal session

Communication and breaking bad news

Patient scenario 5

Leila is a 38 year old lady from Gaza City who is married with 5 children and though she initially refused investigations and treatment she underwent a mastectomy 2 years ago. She did not complete her radiotherapy treatment at Augusta Victoria Hospital. She self-referred to the pain and palliative care team 2 weeks ago. She has a large fungating wound on her right breast extending to her axilla which bleeds on contact and is foul-smelling. She had also noticed increasing breathlessness and a non-productive cough. She is easily fatigued and feels better when she is resting but even mild activity makes her feel breathless.

1. What are the possible causes of her symptoms? be specific
2. Write a holistic problem list
3. What is your initial management plan?

Discussion and learning

Breathlessness cause and management

Access to treatment

Fungating wounds: impact and management

Social impact

Focal session

Breathlessness assessment and management

Patient scenario 6

Mohammad is a 26 year old taxi driver who has a severely injured right leg following a gunshot injury to the knee. His close friend died in the same incident. He had initial surgery and debridement. His lower leg now has poor circulation and significant tissue damage and the surgeons are discussing whether he may need a lower limb amputation. He had no pain relief in the emergency room at Shifa hospital and has continued to experience severe pain in his foot on movement and a burning sensation at rest. He struggles to sleep and is increasingly withdrawn and irritable. His mother is very concerned he is not eating and is losing strength.

1. What are the causes of the symptoms? be specific
2. Write a holistic problem list
3. What is your initial management plan?

Discussion and learning

Complex trauma

Mental health issues

Post amputation pain

Spiritual and social impact

Focal session

Complex management

Mental health and spiritual issues in complex trauma