

OT Needs of Older Adults With Acute Myeloid Leukemia Undergoing Chemotherapy

Farrell Leigh Wiggins, MS, OTR/L¹, Mackenzi Pergolotti, Todd Schwartz, Dr PH², Zachary Ripberger, MS, OT/L¹, Susan Coppola, OTD, MS, OT/L, FAOTA², Ashley Bryant, RN, PhD, OCN, FAAN³, Ya-Ning Chan, RN, PhD, MSN², Alexis Petteway

¹UNC Health, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States; ²University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States; ³UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States

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Primary Author and Speaker: Farrell Leigh Wiggins, farrellwiggins@gmail.com

PURPOSE: To better understand the occupational therapy needs of adults with AML during cycle 1 for treatment of oral Venetoclax (VEN) and Infusional Hypomethylating Agent (HMA). Occupational therapy services for older adults with cancer are recognized to address functional and occupational needs. Access to these services is severely limited and underutilized.

DESIGN: Prospective inception cohort trial (Clinicaltrials.gov #NCT04570709).

METHOD: Possibilities for Activity Scale (PActS), Activity Measure in Post-Acute Care (AM-PAC) mobility and activities of daily living (ADL) scales, Performance Rate Assessment of Self-Care Skills (PASS, medication management and hand hygiene task), clock-drawing, Timed Up and Go (TUG), and Berg Balance Scale, hand-grip strength.

RESULTS: Patients (N = 20) were 74.7 ± 7.5 years, (range: 64–89), predominantly male (n = 15, 75%), White (n = 18, 90%) and with some college education (n = 11, 55%). Average PActS score 43, (range 29–60), AM-PAC ADL raw scores (23.4 mean, 1.3SD, 19–24) and mobility (19.7 mean, 0.7 SD, 17–20), PASS hand hygiene and medication management, both average of 3 (range 1–3), clock drawing (n = 18) average of 12.5 (0.07 SD, 11–13), TUG average 13.1 (4.2SD, 6.6–21.0), Berg average 49.7 (5.9SD, range 39.0–56.0), average grip strength (Non-Dominant 44.6 (10–79.7); Dominant 48.7 (range 17–81.7)).

CONCLUSION: Gaps in occupational therapy services for older adults with cancer call for data on needs of this population. This study demonstrated the need for occupational therapy services in early phases of chemotherapy to address a range of functional needs of these clients. However, based on these findings alone, we recognized a need for more detailed assessment on cognitive decline and meaningful occupations. Future studies will include more in-depth assessments with these needs in mind.

IMPACT STATEMENT: Up to 70 percent of all cancer survivors will be over the age of 65 in 2040, representing a large majority of cancer survivors, yet, knowledge of their needs is largely unknown because they are excluded from most cancer trials. This study has a powerful influence on occupational therapy by demonstrating the need for occupational therapy services in cancer care for policy makers and provides evidence of unmet needs of this vulnerable population.

References

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