Assessing the effect of telephone support on patients with myeloma multiple (MM) in the Catalan oncology institute in Girona

C.L. Puigmarti, M. Sole, G. Osca, Y. Gonzalez, N. Kelleher
Haematology, Catalan Institute of Oncology (ICO)-Hospital Universitari Josep Trueta, Girona, Spain

Background: MM is an incurable plasma cell malignancy characterized by excess paraprotein secretion with secondary organ effects including bone destruction and anaemia, renal damage and immune system impairment. MM presents as a relapsing-remitting illness throughout the patient’s life, resulting not only in individualized management but also in complicated treatment with continuous revision and management of the cumulative secondary effects. MM is diagnosed at a median age of 69 years and due to the increase of the population age, it is expected that its incidence be doubled in coming years. Our Myeloma Functional Unit (MFU) has been working since 2017. The MFU is a multidisciplinary team set up in order to provide better care to these patients. In this unit, the MM specialist nurse is in charge of supporting all aspects of patient care as well as contacting with them to ensure adherence to treatment and to control secondary effects. Telephone contact also serves as a clinical support for patients. This study aimed to assess the effect of telephone support on patients with MM and whether the results can be used to identify weak points in education and patient care.

Methods: We prospectively collected phone calls made between January and April 2018 for evaluation. Calls were evaluated using a questionnaire which took into account patient’s sex; maker of the call; the enquire motive; date of the call and overall results.

Results: The data is gathered from a sample of 169 calls registered. 62% of patients were male and 38% female. Call makers were: 49% from MM specialist nurse, 31% patients, 17% caregivers, and 3% others. Some of the calls were to clarify more than one issue. The enquiry motives of calls were: 49% related to secondary effects, 39% related to appointments, 29.5% related to treatment information, 17% general issues. Finally regarding outcomes: 80% were resolved by MM specialist nurse and 20% of the calls required a physician help.

Conclusions: Most of the calls were resolved by MM specialist nurse. A greater nurse–led communication between the MM specialist nurse and patient and the option of resolving doubts or problems by telephone can reduce the medical visits of patient with MM between treatments and improve their quality of life.

Legal entity responsible for the study: Cesca Llopis Puigmarti.
Funding: Has not received any funding.
Disclosure: All authors have declared no conflicts of interest.