

Cancer and Distress

What is Cancer-related Distress?

- Cancer can be a difficult and stressful illness. Many people experience distress during their cancer experience. This is because cancer affects more than just your body – it can affect many parts of your life such as your emotions and feelings, your work, your finances, and your relationships with family and friends.
- Distress can be described in many ways. Some people describe distress as a general feeling of discomfort or upset.

What is Patients Come First: Your Symptoms and Concerns Matter?

- We would like to know how you are feeling and coping with your cancer.
- To better understand how you are doing, your health care team will ask you to complete a short questionnaire (either on paper or electronically). It is called Patients Come First: Your Symptoms and Concerns Matter. It will take a few minutes to complete. It is easy to fill out.
- This will help us to better support you in coping with your illness and its treatment.

What can I expect when I complete the Patients Come First questionnaire?

- Once you fill out your questionnaire, someone from your health care team will review it with you.
- You and your health care provider will then work together to decide on what might help you to deal with the concerns you identified.

- For example, you might be:
 - › Encouraged to attend an education session and be given an information sheet
 - › Provided with information about community resources
 - › Offered a referral to a specialist such as a social worker or dietician, if you think it would be helpful for you

What are the benefits of completing the Patients Come First questionnaire?

- Screening is a quick way for your health care team to understand the issues that are concerning you the most today.
- Screening can help you to play a more active role in your care.
- By letting us know what is concerning you, we can provide you with information about services and resources that are available to help.

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider. The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.