

Collaborative Approach to Treating Hospital Avoidant Patients

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Background

Case study of a collaborative, remote and digital approach to providing chemotherapy at home to a young adult who refused to attend hospital.

Assessment

X is an 18-year-old man diagnosed with an 11cm right paraspinal Ewing Sarcoma at L4 to S2 who, following diagnosis, refused to attend hospital for chemotherapy. X lived at home with his supportive parents in a rural area- 100kms away from the hospital. Although undiagnosed, X's mother indicated he was neurodivergent and struggled with anxiety.

Goal of Care

The treatment plan for X was alternating cycles of vincristine/doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide and ifosfamide/etoposide for a total of 14 cycles. Surgical intervention after cycle 6 and radiation treatment concurrently from cycle 7. X presented to the hospital day unit for his first cycle of treatment, however left before treatment commenced, refusing to return.

Interventions

Following X's refusal to have treatment in hospital, the Young Adult Cancer Coordinator requested View Health- chemo@home (VHc@h) provide treatment at home. Treatment was ordered by the oncologist and administered by VHc@h. The two teams collaborated regarding pathology, clinical reviews, management of side effects, delays due to adverse events and protocol modifications to accommodate home treatment. All communication between the treating team at hospital, VHc@h and the patient were attended to via multiple digital platforms. At the time of writing X had successfully received 4 cycles of chemotherapy at home despite having not met his treating oncologist or team face to face.

Evaluation

Working collaboratively with the oncology team enable this patient to receive lifesaving treatment where he would otherwise had none. Ensuring the same few nurses attended X regularly enabled rapport and trust to develop, which helped to dissipate anxiety resulting in treatment adherence.

Conclusion/Implication for Practice

The collaborative approach between hospital and specialised home service, aided by digital platforms, is mutually beneficial strategy that enhances the accessibility of healthcare to hospital avoidant patients.