

# Patient perspectives on an interdisciplinary prostate cancer supportive care program (P122) PCSC@vch.ca

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## Background

The Prostate Cancer Supportive Care (PCSC) Program is a designed to address the challenges of decision-making and coping faced by men with Prostate Cancer (PC), their partners, and family members. A central component of the program is a series of education sessions that provide information on prostate cancer biology, treatment, and side effects; sexual health and rehabilitation; incontinence; diet; exercise; and androgen deprivation therapy.

**The objective of this analysis is to assess participant feedback on the education sessions, and to compare potential benefits for patients and partners.**

## Methods

### Subjects:

Men who registered with the PCSC program at the Vancouver Prostate Centre and attended at least one education session between February 2013 and September 2016 (N= 1357 anonymized surveys).

### Measures and Analyses:

- We designed a feedback tool with Likert-based, and Boolean response items, as well as qualitative commentary.
- The tool included questions that assessed the timing, structure, and content of each session.
- We examined rates of satisfaction across each of the five education sessions and compared scores between patients and partners using t-tests.

## PCSC Education Sessions

**Introduction to prostate cancer and primary treatment options**  
Session delivered by a urologist, radiation oncologist and patient representative.

- Presents PC treatment options, possible side-effects, recurrence of disease, and availability of other PCSC programs.
- Patients and partners meet individually with urologist and radiation oncologist.
- Patient representative speaks about their own PC journey.

**Managing the impact of prostate cancer treatments on sexual function and intimacy**

- Session delivered by sexual health RN.
- Focuses on sexual health and sexuality, understanding how prostate cancer treatments affect sexual function, the importance of penile rehabilitation, ways to manage sexual dysfunction, and the dimensions of intimacy

**Lifestyle management: nutrition and exercise**

- Registered dietician from the BC Cancer Agency and a exercise physiologist with a certified cancer specialty.
- Nutrition session covers diet after a diagnosis of PC, the use of supplements, body weight and health, managing the side effects of ADT through lifestyle, and practical nutrition tips.
- Exercise session covers the importance of exercise for prostate cancer treatment side effects, maintaining quality of life and long-term survival, and strategies for exercising daily.

**Adapting to androgen deprivation therapy (ADT)**

- Session delivered by patient facilitator and researcher
- Covers ADT side effects and mitigation strategies.
- Attendees receive the 2014 book "Androgen deprivation therapy: an essential guide for prostate cancer patients and their loved ones".

**Pelvic floor physiotherapy for Urinary Incontinence**

- Session delivered by physiotherapist who is specialized in male pelvic floor physiotherapy.
- Focuses on effects of PC treatments on continence, and anatomy and techniques for bladder control and minimizing erectile dysfunction.

## Results

- Participants found information presented at the sessions comprehensive, clear and easy to understand (Table 1)
- Average satisfaction score was 3.63 (out of a possible 4) ranging from 3.46 to 3.79 across the different sessions. (Table 2)
- We found no difference in satisfaction between patients and partners except for the sexual health education session, which was rated better by partners compared to patients (p=0.03).
- 86% of patients found the inclusion of their partners at the sessions useful.
- For the sexual health and physiotherapy modules, attendees were more satisfied if they attended before treatment (Sexual health: before: 3.77, after: 3.58, p=0.002. Pelvic floor physiotherapy: before: 3.55, after 3.39, p=0.03)

**Table 1: Feedback tool responses (selection)**

Module	Number (%) who answered affirmatively		
	Info clear & easy to understand?	Any info missed?	Appropriate Length?
Introduction & treatment options (N=249)	242 (97.1)	21 (8.4)	229 (92.0)
Sexual Health (N=259)	258 (99.6)	12 (4.5)	251 (96.9)
Lifestyle management (N=317)	317 (100)	25 (7.9)	240 (92.7)
Pelvic Floor Physio (N=310)	306 (98.7)	26 (8.4)	294 (94.8)

## Results

**Table 2: Patient and Partner Satisfaction Scores for PCSC Modules**

Module	Patients	Partners	Total
Introduction & treatment options (N=249)	3.75 (0.48)	3.85 (0.35)	3.79 (0.43)
Sexual Health (N=259)*	3.62 (0.52)	3.76 (0.43)	3.67 (0.50)
Lifestyle management (N=317)	3.61 (0.54)	3.67 (0.49)	3.63 (0.52)
Androgen Deprivation Therapy (N=227)	3.65 (0.54)	3.70 (0.50)	3.67 (0.52)
Pelvic Floor Physio (N=310)	3.46 (0.63)	3.47 (0.64)	3.46 (0.63)

\*Significant difference between patients and partners: p=0.03

## Summary & Conclusions

Men with prostate cancer and their partners both expressed a high degree of satisfaction with interdisciplinary education sessions provided within a supportive care program. These results can be used to guide the future development of the PCSC program as well as supportive care for prostate cancer patients and partners more broadly.

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