



Testing and Early Diagnosis

The Importance of Patient Centered Care

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Most important is patient centered care. I talked about navigators, I talked about making sure that all the tests are happening in a manner that makes sense to patient if they come from far away. All of that is incredibly important that you pick a centre where this is of priority. In addition to the things that we've just talked about, there are other things that are incredibly important going through a cancer journey is: having access to psychosocial support, having access to financial counsellors, and caregiver support. It's a conversation that does not happen a lot while you're in clinic with your physician talking about the treatments. But a lot of cancer therapies are incredibly expensive, a lot of tests are incredibly expensive, and going into this not having an idea of what kind of expenses you're looking at can be very distressing for patients and caregivers. A lot of places have recognised that as an issue, and can provide patients with access to financial counselling if the physician is not something who is comfortable having that discussing. But I think these are important questions to ask, and these are important questions to think about when picking a place for cancer care. And, sort of, like I alluded to before, having multidisciplinary discussions here you have surgeons and oncologists and radiation doctors all sitting together and talking about care is incredibly important — that they are all there, and that they are all talking to each other — to make sure that the right sequence of care is provided to you or your caregiver for lung cancer.

There are several advocacy groups, and there are several education websites — like NCCN, and ASCO — and websites that provide guidelines where you can be directed to. It's always helpful to get names of these organisations from your care team, rather than from going on Google and often finding information that might cause a lot of distress and might not be accurate. But there are advocacy groups out there that you could be connected to. So, if you have a tumour with EGFR mutation, there is a whole advocacy group of patients and caregivers who have the same mutations, so it's helpful to be connected to those groups so you can talk to them about what to expect and sort of what the journey looks like.

And most of all, across the continuum, from screening to treatment, safety is incredibly important. It needs to be woven through the entire process. Again, having access to a centre that can provide all of these pieces, including supportive care and taking care of your symptoms, and the sort of holistic care, is incredibly important. And at every step of the way, I hope patients and caregivers understand that there is communication that's happening and that every decision is a shared decision making. So what doctors and are teams are offering are options. Ultimately, patients need to make sure they have all the information that they need so that the decision is ultimately theirs when picking any kind of treatments that are offered to them.

And most of all, again, sort of as an advocacy goal for us is to make sure that all of the high quality science and research that's coming out is available to every patient regardless of where they live. One of the biggest push that all the large organisations that fund clinical research is to make sure we fund clinical trials that we include patients from all the backgrounds, not just the patients that can afford to go to certain centres and get care. So, we want to make sure that clinical trials represent



patients from minority populations, women, and people who live in rural areas. And, to make sure that our patients are not having to travel to centres far away for clinical trials, but bringing clinical trials closer to home. And, so these are things that we know as caregivers, as patients, that we need to ask for, and something that I know that all the doctors and healthcare systems are also becoming more aware of.