

## CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY UNIT

KIDWAI MEMORIAL INSTITUTE OF ONCOLOGY [KMIO],  
DR. M H MARIGOWDA ROAD, BANGALORE-560029.

Details required for KMIO website:

1- 7.

The Clinical Psychology Unit is a referral Unit. The Unit comprises of 1 clinical psychologist only. The work of the clinical psychology Unit is primarily **clinical**- clinical service. However, there is scope for more **academic** and **research** activities.

Patients requiring psychological assessment and management are referred to the clinical psychologist through a written referral. The patients (children\ adults, outpatients\ inpatients, males\ females) can be referred from anywhere along the continuum of cancer i.e., from before investigation until the terminal stage. The means of identification of a patient who requires psychological help could be through the patient himself\ herself, through family member\ caretaker, through the nursing staff or any member of the treating team. However, the written referral is made by the treating physician.

- A. The **clinical** work entails a) *assessment* of patients through *interviews*, and *psychometry* if needed, over 1 or 2 sessions, each session lasting for an hour at least. Family members are also interviewed as and when the need arises. Psychometry is also done for specific reasons when required by the referring Department\ Unit).b) *Counselling\ psychotherapy* is offered to patients and family members as per the requirement, the number of sessions varying from patient to patient, each session lasting for 1/2 an hour to 1 hour at least. c) The clinical work also includes *follow- up interviews* to ascertain whether psychological therapy gains are being maintained and for the assessment and management of new problems if any. d) *Bereavement counseling/ grief work* for the family members after the death of the patient is also done as needed.

Referral to psychiatry is made preferably through the treating physician of the respective Department\ Unit if patients present with organic mental disorders, mental and behavioural disorders due to psychoactive substance use, schizophrenia, schizotypal and delusional disorders, mood disorders, or if patients require psychotropic medication in addition to psychological therapy. Most often, the treating physicians themselves put the patient on a small dose of anxiolytics and\ or antidepressants or even antipsychotics for a short period of time. Although a referral is made to psychiatry, patients and family members will need to continue to see the clinical psychologist.

- B. **Academic** activities in association with other Departments\Units from the point of providing assistance if needed are carried out. Informal interactive discussions with and sometimes didactic lectures when needed\ required, for students posted at KMIO (social work, nursing), volunteers visiting KMIO, and others, on the role of a clinical psychologist in a cancer setting- highlighting the psychological issues of cancer, have been an ongoing activity.

There have also been two occasions when an M Phil trained clinical psychologist and a postgraduate in Psychology (regular) have spent time as an observer for periods of 1 week and 10 days, respectively.

- C. As far as **research** work is concerned, an attempt to do research work in association with other Departments\Units has been an ongoing activity. Thus far, 2 M Phil trainees in Medical

and Social Psychology, Department of Clinical Psychology, now Department of Mental Health and Social Psychology, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro sciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore, have conducted small research projects as a requirement for their M Phil training in collaboration with certain Departments\ Units of our Institute. A PhD scholar from the Department of Mental Health and Social Psychology, NIMHANS has conducted her Doctoral study in collaboration with the Department of Paediatric Oncology of our Institute.

The objectives set for future work are to improve clinical services, increase academic and research activities and get involved in interdepartmental\unit programmes, if possible.

Clinical psychology services are extended to staff and students of KMIO as well, if needed.

8.

EDUCATION: 2008 and after-

Lectures have been taken for nursing students of the Post Basic Diploma in Oncology Nursing Course.

2009 onwards.

Invited to deliver a lecture on 'communicating with a cancer patient' at the Pre-Conference Workshop of the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of Gynaecologic Oncologists entitled 'Issues in the Nursing Care of the Woman with Gynaecologic cancer.' November 12<sup>th</sup> 2010 at the St. Johns College of Nursing.

Lectures have been taken for 2<sup>nd</sup> year MSc Nursing students (Oncology specialty) 2013 onwards.

9.

RESEARCH: 2008 and after-

Publications:

National-

Abraham, A; and Appaji, L. (2009).Cognitive assessment of children with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia: preliminary findings. Indian Journal of Medical and Paediatric Oncology, 30, 14-19.

Others-

Abraham, A. (2008).Non compliance- Psychological issues. Oncoscope, 10, 5-8.

Abraham, A. (2009).Burnout.Oncoscope, 11, 13-16.

Abraham, A. (2010-2011).Breaking bad news in cancer care. A summary of the process.Oncoscope, 12-13, 3.

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