

4. CONSULTATION: TREATMENT OPTIONS

DISCUSSING TREATMENT OPTIONS: PROVIDING INFORMATION & CHOICE

Reference: Psychosocial Clinical Practice Guidelines (1999), pp.17-22.

EVIDENCE

- The amount of information, mode of expression, framing (negative or positive) and a doctor's communication style influences a woman's decision about treatment (Level II).

OBJECTIVE

To ensure that, when consulting with a woman with breast disease, she has access to accurate, reliable information about treatment options.

Before decision-making about treatment

CHECKLIST

- Discuss with the woman how much information regarding treatment options she wants.
- Discuss how involved the woman wants to be in decision-making.
- Give the woman a copy of the pamphlet "Making decisions about treatment: A guide for women with breast cancer".
- Provide the woman with time to consider options & to consult with family & friends prior to finalising treatment plan.
- Reassure the woman that she has time to consider treatment options (explain that waiting a week or two to confirm her treatment plans will not affect the outcome).

Providing accurate, reliable information about treatment options

CHECKLIST

- Use consumer friendly language when discussing treatment options with the woman & her support person.
- Consider woman's individual needs and preferences. Considerations include:
 - isolation (geographic & social)
 - transport availability
 - accommodation issues
 - support for family at home.
- Reduce barriers to treatment choices by providing appropriate support services.
- Consult the Breast Care Nurse to discuss & reinforce information & provide followup.
- Discuss expected outcomes, including major side effects of each treatment option.
- Use a variety of information, eg. written, graphic, audiovisual.
- Ensure the woman has a copy of "All About Early Breast Cancer" 1996, *NHMRC National Breast Cancer Centre*.
- Consider suitability for clinical trials, (refer to "Psychosocial Clinical Practice Guidelines", p.21, & "The Management of Early Breast Cancer", pp.23-26):
 - woman fully informed
 - consent obtained (if agreeable).
- Review treatment plan with the woman regularly as preferences for treatment and involvement in decision-making may change over time.
- Obtain informed consent for the treatment choice.