



FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Addressing the Emotional Impact of Cancer

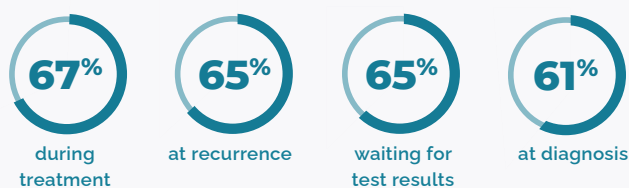
A diagnosis of cancer can be overwhelming. As many as one-quarter of people living with cancer are also living with depressionⁱ and up to 20 percent live with anxiety.ⁱⁱ Studies show that depression and anxiety can negatively impact adherence to recommended cancer treatments and hinder overall quality of life and survival.ⁱⁱⁱ

As mental health continues to gain focus and priority within the healthcare system, the cancer community has an opportunity to join forces to more holistically support the mental health needs of patients and caregivers – leveraging existing wellness resources, normalizing mental health conversations in both medical offices and at home, and addressing barriers to mental health care.

Mental Health Must Be an Integral Part of Quality Cancer Care

With support from BeOne, a recent Cancer Support Community survey of more than 600 U.S. cancer patients who self-identify as having experienced an emotional or mental health concern brought to light some key insights and challenges:^{iv}

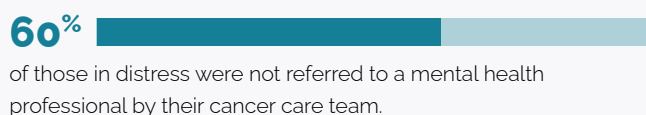
Emotional distress is prevalent across the cancer continuum.



Even those who are post-treatment or have no current evidence of disease often experience some form of emotional distress.

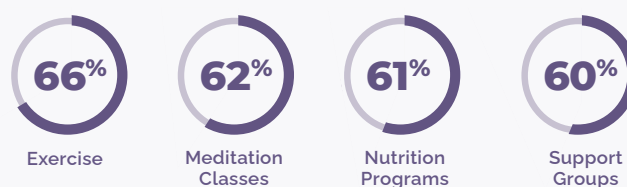
Patients need improved access to mental health care.

While healthcare providers routinely screen for distress and try to support patients, lack of access to resources and systemic barriers to mental health care are common obstacles for practices.



Interventions to complement both medication and counseling are desired

While **48% of respondents were prescribed depression or anxiety medication**, many wanted help accessing other services and activities to help reduce distress.



Attitudinal and access issues present barriers to mental health care.



Resources for Healthcare Professionals

Creating an open dialogue, utilizing distress screenings, and leveraging external support to connect patients and caregivers with resources through cancer community partners are important parts of comprehensive cancer care. Each cancer care team should decide how best to integrate mental health conversations into their practices.

The following are opportunities for cancer care teams to talk about mental health concerns with patients and suggest tools to support them.

- Initiate the conversation about cancer and mental health to start removing the stigma or fear of discussing emotional wellness concerns.
- Engage oncology social workers/oncology nurses within your hospital or practice early and often to help facilitate mental health discussions.
- Partner with a community cancer advocacy organization to provide staff trainings on mental health signs and symptoms.
- Revisit how the practice integrates routine distress screening, referral, and follow-up to ensure effectiveness and efficiencies around care.
- Maintain an updated referral list of mental health professionals, community mental health resources, (e.g., local support groups) and self-care services and activities to provide patients and caregivers.
- Offer waiting room resources for patients and caregivers with links to mental health resources.
- Visit BeOne's new *Talk About It* website that provides links to practical self-care resources for patients and caregivers. Visit www.cancerandmentalhealth.com for a comprehensive list of virtual and in-person psychosocial oncology resources and advocacy partners.

The Cancer Support Community is a global nonprofit organization that provides free emotional support, navigation, and resources to cancer patients and their loved ones. As part of their mission, they are dedicated to inspiring change that improves the cancer experience by engaging in research that sheds light on the realities of coping with a cancer diagnosis.

Share your voice with the Cancer Experience Registry at: www.cancersupportcommunity.org/registry



Talk About It: **Cancer and Mental Health**

BeOne believes mental health support can improve quality of life and health outcomes for people impacted by cancer. Created for patients and caregivers, healthcare professionals and policymakers, our new program, *Talk About It: Cancer and Mental Health*, elevates the important intersection of mental health and cancer care. *Talk About It* features innovative empowerment strategies, advances public policy conversations, and inspires dynamic health equity initiatives to support people throughout their entire cancer journey.

Talk About It is guided by an advisory panel of experts in mental health, oncology, patient advocacy, and behavioral science who share BeOne's intention to systemically integrate mental health and wellness into quality cancer care.



**To learn more about *Talk About It*
or download resources, visit**

www.cancerandmentalhealth.com

ⁱ Krebber AM, Buffart LM, Kleijn G, Riepma IC, de Bree R, Leemans CR, Becker A, Brug J, van Straten A, Cuijpers P, Verdonck-de Leeuw IM. Prevalence of depression in cancer patients: a meta-analysis of diagnostic interviews and self-report instruments. *Psychooncology*. 2014 Feb;23(2):121-30. doi: 10.1002/pon.3409.

ⁱⁱ Mitchell, A. J., Ferguson, D. W., Gill, J., Paul, J., & Symonds, P. (2013). Depression and anxiety in long-term cancer survivors compared with spouses and healthy controls: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet. Oncology*, 14(8), 721-732.

ⁱⁱⁱ Holland et al. (2013). Distress management. *Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network*, 11(2), 190-209. <https://doi.org/10.6004/jnccn.2013.0027>

^{iv} Cancer Support Community (2022). Cancer Experience Registry Spotlight Survey: Identifying Barriers to Accessing Mental Health Care among Cancer Patients and Survivors [Unpublished data, August 2021]