Older Adults Newly Diagnosed With Symptomatic Myeloma and Treatment Decision Making

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Treatment decision-making (TDM) studies have focused on decisional control preferences, with most studies conducted in breast and prostate cancer populations. A systematic review of decisional role preferences among patients with cancer has shown an increasing trend of patients being interested in more participation during TDM (Tariman, Berry, Cochrane, Doorenbos, & Schepp, 2010). To meet and facilitate the patient’s preferred level of participation during TDM, interventional studies geared toward increasing a patient’s decisional satisfaction, reducing decisional conflict, and preventing anxiety and depression related to TDM have been steadily increasing in numbers (Allen et al., 2010; Caldon et al., 2010; Evans et al., 2010), with some studies targeting the older adult with cancer population (Lewis et al., 2010; van Tol-Geerdink et al., 2008).

Interest is growing in the direct assessment of patient preferences, in terms of control of decision making and the changing landscape of the priorities of patients’ information needs (Beaver & Booth, 2007; Denberg, Melhado, & Steiner, 2006; Flynn, Smith, & Vanness, 2006; Mancini et al., 2007; Sabo, St-Jacques, & Rayson, 2007), as well as a predicted shift away from paternalistic decision as baby boomers age (Pipe, Conner, Dansky, Schraeder, & Caruso, 2005). This presents substantial opportunities for improving patient care and clinical outcomes in the area of TDM, particularly in the older adult patient with cancer population.

Increased patient participation in TDM has been associated with positive clinical outcomes such as a greater level of satisfaction with decisions and better psychological adjustment (i.e., less post-decision anxiety and depression) (Gaston & Mitchell, 2005; Gattellari, Butow, & Tattersall, 2001). However, the preferred level of participation in TDM for older patients newly diagnosed with symptomatic myeloma has not been previously studied. In addition, the influence of sociodemographic