Ambulatory Oncology

Infrastructure development in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

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BACKGROUND: The COVID-19 pandemic generated challenges to the delivery of safe, efficient, and high-quality cancer care. In ambulatory oncology, where most cancer care is delivered, these challenges required the rapid development of infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES: This article describes challenges to the design and implementation of ambulatory oncology infrastructures that support clinical oncology care during a pandemic.

METHODS: This article reviews clinical experiences in interprofessional, multicenter, academic, and community settings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cohesive and efficient services, collaborative processes, and workflows; patient triage and symptom management; technology and equipment; and communication strategies are discussed. National ambulatory care guidelines and practice recommendations are included as applicable and available.

FINDINGS: Continued treatment delivery and support for patients with cancer, as well as infrastructure to minimize viral exposure to patients and oncology healthcare workers, are essential when caring for this high-risk population.

KEYWORDS
ambulatory oncology; pandemic; COVID-19; telehealth; oncology nursing

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