

# Bridging the gap: A priorities assessment tool to support shared decision-making, maximize limited appointment time and increase patient satisfaction

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## BACKGROUND

- Women with ovarian cancer, even those who present at advanced stage, often achieve long overall survival and receive multiple treatment regimens.
- Physicians and patients must carefully consider and balance treatment toxicities and quality of life when selecting treatments in this population.
- Previous qualitative and quantitative work demonstrates that patient-physician communication is an essential element in determining treatment course and a discussion about goals and values should precede all treatment decisions.

Objective: To develop a patient-centered priorities assessment tool (PAT) that could be completed quickly and easily in the waiting room immediately prior to appointments to streamline communication, enhance treatment discussions and increase patient satisfaction.

## METHODS

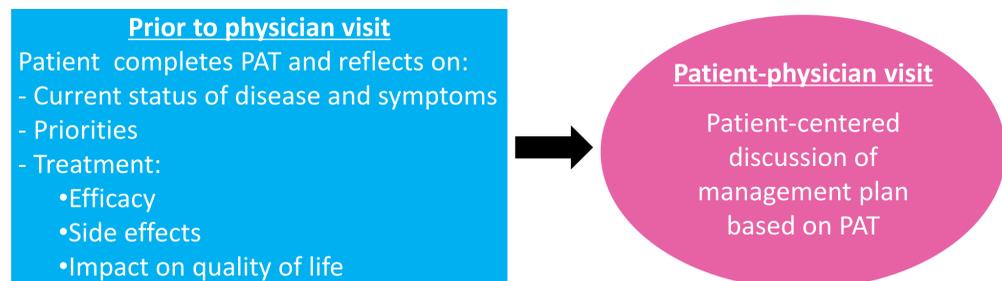
- We designed a one page PAT utilizing the validated ovarian cancer symptom index (NCCN-FACT FOSI-18) combined with an index to assess daily quality of life priorities that may be impacted by treatment side effects (Figure 2).
- The PAT was distributed to women with ovarian cancer in small focus group settings and online, followed by a post-activity feedback form.

**Figure 1. Patient-physician communication: Traditional model vs. PAT**

1a. Traditional model of patient-physician communication



1b. Proposed model of patient-physician communication using PAT



## IDEAL FEATURES OF PAT

- PAT appears to be most helpful to recurrent patients requiring treatment changes.
- For patients, PAT should:
- help assess current physical status
  - facilitate identification of what is most important to them (priorities)
  - be easy to complete in waiting room prior to appointments (10-15 mins)
  - increase satisfaction with shared decision-making
- For physicians, PAT should:
- optimize use of limited appointment time
  - be easy to review prior to meeting patient
  - enhance physician-patient communication
  - create natural segue to discussion about potential risks and benefits

**Figure 2. Priorities Assessment Tool (PAT)**

Priorities Assessment						
Below is a list of statements that other people with your illness have said are important when considering a new treatment for recurrence. Please circle one number per line to indicate how important it is to you as it applies today.						
TOP 5	Not important	A little important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Living independently	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caring for others	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Managing fatigue	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Managing pain	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enjoying food and eating a balanced diet	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Working with my hands	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking or standing for 30 minutes	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thinking clearly	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spending time outdoors	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engaging in social activities	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	My appearance	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Being able to engage in sexual activity	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Taking a break from chemotherapy	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Having flexibility with appointment scheduling	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Making fewer trips to the clinic	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Working outside the home	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	My hobbies	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Daily exercise	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attending an upcoming special event	0	1	2	3	4
☑ NEXT: Please go back to the above list and choose your TOP 5 most important priorities with a mark in the box to the left.						
	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am interested in available clinical trials	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	I need help managing side effects	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have difficulty making it to appointments	0	1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am concerned with other issues (at home / financial)	0	1	2	3	4

## RESULTS

- Thirty-six women completed the PAT and thirty-five completed the post-activity feedback form between September 2015 and May 2016.
- All participants reported that the PAT was easy to understand and comprehensive in scope.
- Thirty-four (94%) participants completed the PAT in under 15 minutes, with most (n=29/81%) completing it in 5-10 minutes.
- Most participants (n=31/86%) were able to stratify their priorities and identify five top treatment-related priorities.
- Participants who indicated their goals and priorities had changed since diagnosis (n=26/72%) reported that the PAT helped them to identify current goals and priorities (n=22/26 or 85%) and that the PAT would help them feel more comfortable participating in shared decision-making with their medical team (n=21/26 or 81%).
- Two participants asked to take the PAT with them to their next clinic appointment
- **Feedback patient comments:**  
*“Just thinking over the experiences of the last 2 years was enlightening.”*  
*“Helps identify what is important.”*  
*“Makes you assess your priorities.”*  
*“The most helpful part is listing the top 5 priorities.”*

## CONCLUSIONS

- A PAT that combines current symptom index with daily quality of life priorities was easy to complete and viewed as comprehensive and useful in a pilot cohort of women with ovarian cancer.
- Use of a PAT has the potential to enhance communication, promote shared decision-making and improve patient satisfaction while maximizing efficiency of limited appointment time.
- A pilot of this PAT in gynecologic oncologists’ offices is ongoing.

### References

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2. Minion LE, Coleman RL, Alvarez RD, Herzog TJ. Endpoints in clinical trials: What do patients consider important? A survey of the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance. Gynecol Oncol. 2016.
3. Herzog TJ, Armstrong DK, Brady MF, Coleman RL, Einstein MH, Monk BJ, et al. Ovarian cancer clinical trial endpoints: Society of Gynecologic Oncology white paper. Gynecol Oncol. 2014