

Information to the patient with cancer: the oncologist's view

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Objective: To identify what information is provided to patients by oncologists, assess what they take into account in the process of informing the patient, and to ascertain whom the information is provided to. **Methods:** The study subjects were oncologists recruited among those registered at the Brazilian Society of Clinical Oncology – SBOC. All material was mailed to the Society, which was then forwarded to the participant oncologists. The previously stamped envelopes contained: a questionnaire, the questionnaire instructions, and the informed consent form to be signed. The data obtained was statistically treated, following a 95% confidence interval. **Results:** 876 questionnaires were sent (total number of physicians registered at SBOC) and a 16.55% response rate was achieved. Regarding the information provided, 81% of the physicians responded they informed patients about diagnosis, treatment and prognosis; however, 73% reported that in most cases the patient is already aware of his/her disease. Nevertheless, the information is provided to the patient and his(her) family by 81% of doctors. Among the relevant aspects in the information process, the patient's gender has little influence on the information for 95% of doctors. **Conclusion:** Considering the results achieved, we conclude that in the study population, physicians are concerned about providing information according to the patient's profile. We could also notice that oncologists try to provide patients with the information they are entitled to — the truth, although they often resort to the family's assistance in providing that information.

Keywords: Personal autonomy; physician-patient relations; disclosure; bioethics.

Study conducted at the Health