

# Psycho-Oncology Program

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Our lives are dedicated to yours



# History

Psychosocial issues have a deep impact on patients' with cancer physical and mental wellbeing. Psycho-oncology has risen as a relatively new interdisciplinary field that addresses these issues and provide support for patients confronting numerous challenges throughout the different stages of the disease.

In 2020, the Psycho- Oncology Program was established as a joint initiative between the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute and the Department of Psychiatry at AUBMC, to be the first integrative collaborative care psycho-oncology program in Lebanon and the region.

**The program aims to support patients with cancer and their families, help them better manage their disease and its progression, and improve their quality of life, clinical outcomes, and advocacy throughout their cancer journey. The program provides a gold- standard, criteria-driven, patient- and family- centered multidisciplinary standardized care from diagnosis onto survivorship.**

Cancer, and also its medical treatments, leads to a broad variety of physical and psychosocial problems. There is actually no right or wrong way to feel about a disease that can be challenging especially since it requires a significant amount of coping. Some of the feelings you face might seem conflicting. They might change at different times, but rest assured that they are all normal.

Emotions can vary as people can have different ways of reacting to cancer under unique circumstances and across the disease trajectory.



**About 20 - 25% of patients with cancer face significant emotional distress that affects their functioning.**



As a result, the Psycho-Oncology Program team members attempt to **ease the psychological burden of the disease for cancer survivors on their journey by working closely with the medical team to provide mental health interventions that address emotional distress and psychiatric conditions.** This may include medication management to control symptoms, individual counseling, psychotherapy, group therapy or healing services.

# Our Mission

Psycho-Oncology Program supports patients with cancer in relieving the psychological burden of the disease to improve day-to-day functions and quality of life, along with clinical outcomes. As patient advocates, we provide timely services to support the patient's and caregiver's ability to engage in cancer treatment.

# Our Vision

We aim to make psycho-oncology an integral part of care for every patient with cancer and their family, to ensure that they have the right integrated medical, psychiatric, and psychological treatment plan that is essential for improved quality of life and increased coping.

# Our Services

Medical management of psychiatric symptoms that may exist prior to the illness but that also may be a result of the cancer or its treatments.

 **One-on-one interventions for patients with cancer**

 **One-on-one interventions for family members**

 **Group interventions for family members**

 **Expressive therapies**

 **Group therapy**

 **Survivorship support**

 **Grief and bereavement support**



The program's wide spectrum of supportive services aims to **provide all patients with cancer and their families with care that resonates with them, based on their individual needs.** As such, patients can benefit from **one-on-one interventions, support groups** for varied populations including survivors and families, and **psycho-educational sessions and workshops** covering topics such as nutrition, fear of remission, body image, and coping strategies and skills.



# Our Team

Our team is multidisciplinary and includes a psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, oncology and psychiatry nurses.

## Who can benefit from this program?

If you or a loved one have recently been diagnosed with cancer, are going through cancer treatment, are a survivor, or are going through cancer care transitions, the psycho-oncology program is the right program to assist you in your journey. Its interventions and healthcare professionals provide patients and their loved ones with the necessary treatment plan, coping tools, and stress-management skills to better adjust to the cancer disease trajectory and the emotional stressors it entails.

Psychological support during difficult transitional times reduce pain, improve cancer treatment outcomes, decrease adverse symptoms of disease and treatment, increase medical adherence and compliance, and increase involvement in medical decision making and self-advocacy.

## Why come to us?

The Psycho-Oncology Program ensures the timely and early comprehensive provision of mental health interventions, enhanced through frequent and regular screening of distress and close monitoring of well-being.

We strive to provide patients with a holistic collaborative treatment plan that is tailored to the unique needs and experience of the patient and family.

# Location and Appointment Scheduling

The Psycho-Oncology Program is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor at the Department of Psychiatry in the Aida and Halim Daniel Academic Center (Daniel ACC). To contact us, please call +961-1-759 620 ext: 5650

