



# Shared decision making communication aid

## COMMUNICATION ABOUT RISK

### When communicating about risk of recurrence...

#### How should I set upfront expectations about the treatment journey?

- Explain the risk of recurrence after surgery and that not everyone benefits with the same efficacy from chemotherapy
- Highlight that, after chemotherapy, there might be more treatment to come than just endocrine therapy

#### What advice should I give on the potential results of a gene expression test?

- When introducing the utility of a gene expression test, ensure the patient is fully aware of the potential outcome of the results and confirm that they can handle the consequences regardless of the outcome
- If a patient does not want a gene expression test:
  - Stress that endocrine therapy alone is also effective
  - Ensure that the patient would be happy with making this decision long-term

#### Should I keep a record of shared decision making conversations?

- It is important to ensure you document any shared decision with the patient and that they also approve what has been documented, for both clinician and patient benefit
- For critical decisions made by the patient, ensure to have this signed

#### What advice should I give specifically to patients with 4+ positive nodes?

- Stress that there are many options despite the high risk
- Communicate that the more treatment options added, the lower the risk and better the outcome will probably be

### When communicating about residual risk...

- Explain the need for a neoadjuvant approach for patients with a high local tumor burden (e.g. bulky axilla)
- When explaining about the goal of pathologic complete response (pCR), ensure patients are aware that if they don't achieve it, there are other treatment options that can follow to further reduce risk of recurrence
- Advise the patient on germline BRCA testing and the implications for both them and their family
- If the patient has a BRCA mutation, ensure there is counselling available to them

## KEY MESSAGES

- The patient needs to fully understand their risk in order to make joint decisions about their care
- Only offer additional tests to patients who are able to accept the consequences of the results; good or bad



## COMMUNICATION ABOUT TREATMENT

### When communicating about treatment options...

#### What are the key messages I should give on each option?

- Explain in appropriate language at what stage and for whom each treatment option is beneficial
- When talking about side effects, be sure to highlight that they can be managed through dose adjustments, additional medication, and supportive care
- When dose reduction is the choice, inform the patient that the treatment will still work
- Tell them your preferred treatment option so they can make an advised decision

#### How much information should I give upfront?

- It is best to explain the different treatment lines and options in a step-by-step manner so as to not overwhelm the patient
- It can be helpful to request that the patient sums up what you have told them to ensure they understand

#### What can I do to boost adherence, specifically on longer lasting therapies?

- Make sure the patient can distinguish between the life threatening/urgent side effects and the ones that can be managed at home
- Reassure the patient that they can always speak to their healthcare team if concerned

#### How should I communicate about common side effects, e.g. GI toxicity?

- Set expectations upfront that side effects such as diarrhea are likely to be different to their previous experiences of it and that they should take their prescribed medication for it as soon as possible
- Stress that if any side effects become very problematic, dose adjustments can be made which won't compromise efficacy

#### Should I initiate more regular monitoring or take the patient's direction for follow-up appointments?

- Schedule more regular follow-up initially and once the patient gets used to managing the side effects, this can be reduced or scheduled by the patient as needed

#### Should I use patient decision aids?

- The patient aids that the manufacturer develops can be helpful as they have the most up-to-date data on side effects, etc.
- Information shared should be tailored to each patient where possible
- Listing the pros and cons of each treatment with side effects can be particularly useful to support patient decision making, especially with newer treatments

### KEY MESSAGES

- Highlight that with new treatments, come new side effects but that usually these can be managed through dose adjustments, additional medication, and supportive care
- There should be a process of shared communication throughout the whole treatment journey



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