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WELCOME

CHEERS TO 2022: ENCOURAGING WORDS TO START THE NEW YEAR

BY TARYN NEWSOME, CPhT
NCODA

Happy New Year OPTA Members! As we quickly delve into the beginning of the new year, I want to take this opportunity to encourage you to make the most of 2022 and get involved with OPTA! One of OPTA’s primary goals is to advocate for oncology pharmacy technicians and to be an influential voice for patient cancer care issues, and what better way to advocate than to get involved!

OPTA provides a wide range of opportunities for involvement: article publications and content ideas for OPTA’s monthly meetings, including ideas for hot topics discussions and new drug indication updates. Be our next Technician in Focus where we highlight your, your pharmacy setting, practice and all of your innovative approaches to treating patients with cancer.

Professional development, networking, continuing education and the offering of a new perspective are all benefits of getting involved. OPTA is for oncology pharmacy technicians BY oncology pharmacy technicians!

For information on how to get involved, please contact Taryn.Newsome@ncoda.org

DECEMBER MEETING RECAP

BY TARYN NEWSOME, CPhT
NCODA

WELCOME:

OPTA’s December monthly meeting started with Brandi Gudwien, CPhT and OPTA Co-Chair reading OPTA’s mission and vision statements. Taryn Newsome, CPhT and OPTA Coordinator shared that the OPTA mission statement had recently been revised. Newsome explained the reason for the edit in the mission statement was to accurately encompass all the dynamic roles that make up OPTA. OPTA membership is growing with the evolving role of the oncology pharmacy technician.

Next, Teri Roberts, CPhT and OPTA Leader presented NCODA/OPTA updates. Roberts shared that there is still time to claim the 6 CE’s that were presented at NCODA’s 2021 Fall Summit as well as reminded the OPTA members of the IVE and OCE resources that are available to all NCODA and OPTA members. Lastly, Roberts reminded all OPTA member to get involved. There are many opportunities available and all are welcome to participate.
MEETING PRESENTATIONS
OPTA members are invited to participate in monthly meetings by providing:
• Drug Updates
• Peer Presentations
• Technician in Focus

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES
• NCODA International Monthly Webinar
• NCODA Conferences/Meetings

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Contact:
• Ginger.Blackmon@NCODA.org
• Taryn.Newsome@NCODA.org

OPTA Resources
NCODA DISCUSSION BOARD
https://www.ncoda.org/discussion/pharm-tech/
BASECAMP DOCUMENT STORAGE
https://3.basecamp.com/3780922/reports/progress
NCODA/OPTA WEBSITE
https://www.ncoda.org/oncology-pharmacy-technician-association-opta/

NEXT OPTA MEETING:
3 p.m. EST, Wednesday, February 9th @ 3pm EST
Members will receive a calendar invitation

OPTA Leaders
• Linda Grimsley, CPhT
• Christine Robinson, CPhT
• Emily Zimdars, CPhT
• Brandi Gudwien, CPhT
• Teri Roberts, CPhT
• Sara Eisenhart, CPhT

OPTA Opportunities

THE PQI: OPTA MEMBERS SHARE THE VALUE OF POSITIVE QUALITY INTERVENTIONS

BY TARYN NEWSOME, CPhT
NCODA

The PQI in Action (PQIIA) incorporates opinions and experiences from oncology experts within the medically integrated teams at leading cancer care organizations. Kristin McCauley, CPhT from Kootenai Health in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and Carol Hemersbach, CPhT, BSHCA from Arizona Blood and Cancer Specialists in Tucson, Arizona both participated in the PQIIA for zanubrutinib. They provided the benefits of utilizing the PQI in the pharmacy from an oncology pharmacy technician point of view.

What is the value of the PQI for your practice as well as for oncology pharmacy technicians?

Kristin McCauley:
• More straightforward patient care
• Go-to place to find resources for financial assistance
• Keeps the focus on the patient and better patient care

Carol Hemersbach:
• Proactive side effect management instead of waiting for the patient to start treatment and treating side effects after the fact.
• In depth quick view/one stop for providers/nursing/pharmacy
• Better patient monitoring
• In depth dosing recommendations
• Overall better collaborative care for patient.

Kootenai Health

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THE PQI PODCAST

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Approximately two-thirds of patients diagnosed with cancer will require radiation during their treatment. Of these patients, nearly all will experience side effects or toxicities. Radiation-induced toxicities are categorized as acute, subacute, and chronic. The pharmacy team has the most significant impact on addressing acute toxicities, which typically present during treatment. Radiation-induced dermatitis, mucositis, and xerostomia/taste alterations are the most common acute toxicities and may contribute to treatment interruption or discontinuation.

Radiation-induced dermatitis affects up to 95% of patients and is characterized by redness, itching, and shedding of the skin. Patients should avoid irritants such as sun exposure, extremely hot or cold temperatures, and perfumes/colognes which may further irritate the skin. OTC water-based moisturizers such as Miaderm®, Eucerin®, and Udderly Smooth® are helpful for preventing and treating dry skin. Topical steroids such as hydrocortisone can help with itching. Lidocaine can be used for pain.

Radiation-induced mucositis affects up to 50% of patients and is characterized by soreness, redness, and ulceration of the oral mucous membranes. Patients should avoid irritants such as alcohol, tobacco, and citrusy/spicy foods. OTC treatments include topical anesthetics such as Ulcerease® or Orabase®. Patients may also use oral pain relief such as acetaminophen.

Patients may experience xerostomia which is characterized by dry mouth usually with thick and sticky saliva. These patients should maintain good oral hygiene and proper hydration. Patients may chew gum or suck on hard candies that contain sorbitol or xylitol to help moisten the mouth. OTC oral rinses and sprays such as Biotene® and Lubricity® can also help to lubricate the mouth. MetaQ® is an OTC product to alleviate the metallic taste that some patients may experience with radiation.

**Acute Toxicities**
- Dermatitis
- Mucositis
- Xerostomia
- Dysphasia
- Weight loss
- Taste Alteration
- Nausea/vomiting
- Pain
- Asthenia