



Sexual Counseling in Cancer Part 2

COURSE SYLLABUS

2020

Course Facilitator: Lisa Roelfsema

Course Offering: de Souza Institute in collaboration with the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology

Course Format: Real-time online seminar & eLearning

Contact Information: Victoria.wolno@desouzainstitute.com

Registration: Required

A. INTRODUCTION

Cancer causes wide-ranging impacts on sexual health and wellbeing and numerous studies have identified that people affected by cancer want support, education, and counseling in this area. While health professionals consistently acknowledge that sexuality is within their scope of practice, few health professionals consistently assess or intervene in sexual health problems in cancer settings. The “**Sexual Health and Cancer**” and the “**Sex Counseling in Cancer**” courses are designed to provide health professionals with the knowledge and skills to intervene with the sexual problems that arise in cancer. In the continuing education version, each course is 7 weeks in length. The emphasis in “Sexual Health and Cancer” is on understanding the issues and developing skills in assessment and psycho-education. It is designed for all health professionals who work with people affected by cancer. It is a pre-requisite for the second course “Sex Counseling in Cancer”, which is designed for health professionals who have a counseling practice and wish to develop more skills in sex counseling.

B. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The framework of this course encourages course participants to develop more advanced knowledge and skill in: 1) Evidence based interventions for common cancer related sexual issues; 2) Analysis of case studies to develop treatment plans. 3) Interprofessional knowledge and skill. Attention to meeting the needs of diverse populations will be integrated throughout. Course participants are expected to present their own cases during the seminar for discussion. This course is 7 weeks in length, including one orientation week.

Pre-requisite: Sexual Health in Cancer Part 1

C. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- Develop increasing comfort and skill in assessing the range of sexual health issues that arise in cancer care.
- Incorporate attention to couple relationship concerns in addressing sexual health, recognizing boundaries between couple therapy and sex counselling, particularly when referral to specialists in the area couples therapy might be appropriate.

- Develop comfort in discussing sexual concerns with people from a variety of backgrounds (e.g. LGBT communities, heterosexual, immigrant populations, and persons with disabilities).
- Develop a working knowledge of the application of basic sex therapy techniques for common sexual issues in cancer care using the PLISSIT model. The emphasis in this course will be on the SS (specific suggestions) and IT (intensive therapy). Intensive therapy in this context is not intended to denote couples therapy, but rather more involved psychoeducational /coaching skills.
- Develop theoretical understandings of collaboration and both inter-and trans-professional team work in the context of sexual health care, including forming and maintaining interprofessional relationships and teams and conflict management strategies.
- Understand the roles, responsibilities and professional capabilities of members of other professions.
- Enhance self-awareness, cultural safety and relational practices for effective interprofessional team work, as well as awareness of personal strengths and areas of growth.
- Analyze practice environments and their influence on team collaboration and provision of sexual health care. “Practice environment” is understood to include community.
- Demonstrate understanding of professional boundaries, scope and ethics.
- Describe strategies for self-care.

D. MODE OF LEARNING

- The course design is web-based. Students register for a particular seminar time/interprofessional group. These groups will meet for 90 minutes with a faculty facilitator once each week using online voice technology (“Live Classroom”). Using guided activities and exercises, the small groups will have opportunities to develop and practice interprofessional collaboration skills as well as opportunities to learn from, with and about each other.
- Students are expected to use the online resources to do independent work for the unit. On line resources include content modules, case studies, interviews, narratives, plays, and other dramatic productions.

- Students are expected to take responsibility for ensuring that their computer system is configured for the course site. Computers used at your organization will need to be configured by your own IT department due to firewalls and other barriers such as administrator rights. Simple directions are provided in the “Getting Started Online” booklet, which is emailed to you and is also available on the course site. **Please** ensure that you look after this **before** the course begins. Failure to do so will result in frustration and inconvenience not only for you but also for your group.

E. MODES OF EVALUATION

There is no grade given for this course. However to receive a certificate of completion, course participants are expected to complete the following:

1. **Case Discussion**

Students will select from among a number of provided case examples (see the folder on the course site titled “Assignments”) and a date to discuss their case. They will consider the integrated model of sexual health and formulate a plan for the situation they have selected– that is, what might be the first few steps in helping the person/couple. ONE skill will be practiced as part of a role-play in the seminars (e.g. coaching using erectile aids; “debriefing” sensate focus exercise). Possible role-plays are outlined on the case examples.

2. **Participation**

Students are expected to contribute regularly and meaningfully to online discussions, posted reflection questions and in the online seminar discussions. Students are also expected to contribute to creating a safe learning environment for themselves and their colleagues.

F. FACILITATOR AVAILABILITY

Facilitator for this course will be responsible to guide the eLearning component including online discussion, to lead online conference session, to be available to you for questions throughout the course and to provide final grade. The response time from a participant enquiry to a facilitator response ranges from 24 hour to 48 hours. Technical support is available by contacting support@desouzainstitute.com

See the course page in the eLearning Centre for facilitator contact information.

COURSE TIMELINE

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| Week 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to the Course • Creating an interprofessional community of learning in cyberspace • Introducing “Nancy” – Sexual health concerns and stomas |
| Introduction to Sex Counseling: Current Issues | |
| Week 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is sex counselling? • Historical perspectives & current issues • Chris and Patti |
| Assessment & Intervention with Couples | |
| Week 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Response Cycle and communication • Using an integrated model of sexual health care with couples • Comfort in assessment and education skills across difference • Chris & Patti continued |
| An Integrative Approach to Women’s Sexual Concerns | |
| Week 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual health assessment. • Readdressing the PLISSIT model. |
| An Integrative Approach to Men’s Sexual Concerns | |
| Week 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual health assessment. • Readdressing the PLISSIT model. |
| Issues of Survivorship in Cancer Care | |
| Week 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific issues related to survivorship and sexuality in cancer care. • What are your professional responsibilities and obligations? |
| Professional Ethics and Issues | |
| Week 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics in the context of providing sex counselling. • Course wrap-up. |

Statutory Holidays

When your scheduled seminar falls on a statutory holiday, groups will need to negotiate with their group facilitator about how to make up the seminar time in order that all the topics are covered, i.e., to have a longer seminar the week following or preceding the holiday.

G. FACILITATOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Lisa Roelfsema is a clinical social worker with over 16 years' experience at Trillium Health Partners, the last 10 specializing in working with patients and families affected by Cancer. Part of her role at the Mississauga Halton/Central West Regional Cancer Centre, involves facilitating the Women's Sexual Health Group Program for women who have had any type of cancer. Lisa is also a facilitator of the on-line Gynegals group for women with gynecological cancer experiencing sexual side effects. Lisa also has a long standing interest and additional training in the area of the impact of illness on sexuality and sexual function. Lisa has a private practice in Streetsville for individuals, couples and families struggling with medical illness and related spirituality, sexuality, relationship issues, grief and loss concerns.

H. GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE DISCUSSION

Discussion related to course content will take place in the collaboration discussion forums. The collaboration discussion forums provide you with the opportunity to share ideas and clarify your understanding of course content and readings.

K. SOCIAL FORUM

The social forum is provided for you, the participants, to post news, items of general interest, share information about yourselves and to raise topics of interest beyond the specific questions being discussed in the module-specific forums. All messages of a social nature can be posted in the social forum. This forum is open to all participants, including the facilitator.

L. VIRTUAL LIBRARY

The de Souza Institute has a virtual library <http://library.desouzainstitute.com/login> that can be accessed to those registered in this course or any other de Souza Institute continuing education program. This invaluable resource enables you to access over 1500 e-Journals, 200 e-books and 8 on-line databases such as CINHALL or Ovid-Medline. You can use the virtual library to access the required reading materials for your course. The virtual library can be accessed 24 hours a day using your de Souza Institute login and password.

M. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

eLearning Centre Orientation

If this is the first time you are taking a course offered by the de Souza Institute, please complete the eLearning Centre Orientation. This is designed to introduce you to online learning and help you understand how to navigate through the de Souza Institute eLearning center and courses. The goal of eLearning orientation is to answer all of your questions in order to facilitate a dynamic and meaningful learning experience.

de Souza Support

If you have questions about the content of the course please email your course facilitator. If you need assistance accessing or navigating the eLearning Center, please refer to the eLearning Orientation course. If you have questions or have any general technical difficulties please contact support@desouzainstitute.com

N. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

[Academic Honesty and Copyright Policy](#)

[Cancellations, Incomplete and No Show Policy](#)

Course content and resources provided in this course are based on best practice guidelines from provincial and national bodies. Please consult your educator if you have specific questions related to local protocols and policies as they vary among healthcare organizations.