Facilitating Conversations in the Oncology Multidisciplinary Team

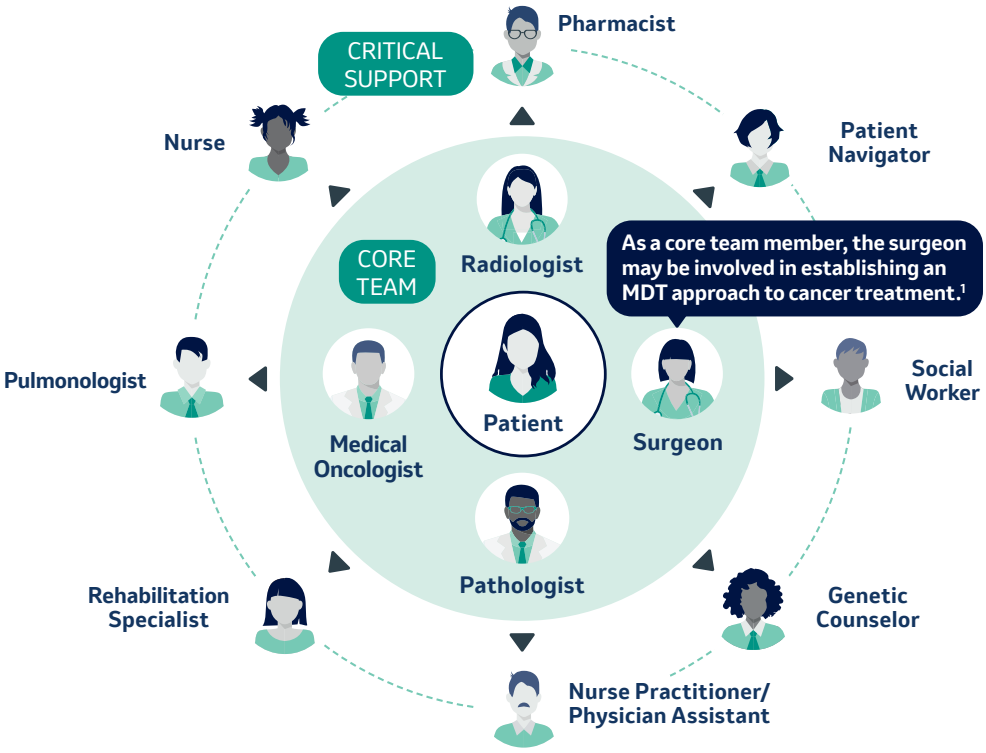
Early Identification of Patients for Neoadjuvant and Adjuvant Therapy

As part of the core team, you may play a critical role in establishing a multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach to cancer treatment.[1]

In collaboration with your MDT, you can continue to identify patients who are eligible for neoadjuvant and adjuvant therapy.[2,3] An MDT approach to treatment may improve communication among the care team prior to and following surgery.[2,4,5]

The MDT approach encourages multiple health care providers and patients to collaborate on treatment decisions throughout the course of cancer care.[6,7] The MDT could involve one or many of the specialties represented on the right.[1,4,5,8,9] For example, a medical oncologist could be brought into an MDT to discuss whether a patient is eligible for systemic therapy.[9]

The Composition of an MDT Can Vary Based on the Tumor Type[1,4,5,8,9]



Cancer Care Can Be Improved With a Multidisciplinary Team Approach[6,7]

- The interdisciplinary communication and education facilitated by an MDT can promote patient-centered decision-making and thus potentially improve coordination and continuity of patient care.[10]
- MDTs can provide a means of addressing comorbidities and include prehabilitation and rehabilitation services in a patient's care plan.[4]
- Collaboration among specialists facilitates the interplay of various treatment modalities, such as surgery, systemic therapy, and radiotherapy.[10,11]
- The MDT may also incorporate tumor boards or direct consultations among specialists.[11]
- The decision to use neoadjuvant or adjuvant therapy can be made by an MDT prior to surgery and in conjunction with treatment guideline recommendations.[2,3]
- Continue to collaborate with your MDT to identify patients eligible for neoadjuvant and adjuvant therapy.[2,3]

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Multidisciplinary Team Meeting Considerations

Consider embedding these select characteristics of high-performing multidisciplinary teams and tumor boards throughout your assessment of your patients with cancer[11,12]:

Team

- Established team with diverse expertise and specializations
- Established leadership (eg, MDT or tumor board chair)
- Teamwork and culture (eg, trust and constructive discussion)

Logistics

- Schedule and regularly attend tumor board meetings
- Ensure appropriate meeting room, technology, and equipment are ready for the team to facilitate hybrid collaboration
- Prepare in advance and keep organized during meetings
- Coordinate patient services post meeting

Patient-Centric Decision-Making

- Local mechanisms in place to identify all patients who require MDT discussion
- Patient-centered care

Governance

- Data collection during team meetings
- Audit of outcomes (eg, patient experience surveys)
- Funding and resources

Some topics to discuss during conversations with your MDT[13-16]:

- **Patient's personal data**
- **Medical history**
- **Present medical conditions**
- **Histological analysis**
- **Lab test and imaging results**
- **Diagnosis and clinical staging**
- **Patient preference**
- **Potential risk factors or complications**
- **Treatment and care plan**

MDT = multidisciplinary team.

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