The multidisciplinary meeting: An indispensable aid to communication between different specialities

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Multidisciplinary team meetings (MDT's) form part of the daily work in most hospitals caring for cancer patients as a form of institutionalised communication. The degree of organisation and the type of communication in these MDTs has a direct impact on the quality of patient care provided. One resulting decision from a multidisciplinary discussion is more accurate and effective than the sum of all individual opinions. Other benefits include consistency in the standard of patient management offered, a teaching element for junior doctors and improvement in communication between different specialists. An MDT needs mature leadership to produce a democratic climate allowing for open and constructive discussion. Controversies, which are inevitable within a team who are striving to reach decisions concerning complex situations, therefore require a variety of approaches for dealing with them when they occur. As MDT's are a key component in a professional's routine, it is worthwhile spending time considering the organisations, targets, documentation and collaboration within the MDT.

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