

GUIDE is a communication framework that helps nurses to empower patients through guidance and support. The five letters in GUIDE stand for gaining insight into the goals of treatment and care, understanding the gaps in the patient's knowledge, informing and educating, directing to additional support, and empowering patients. With the GUIDE communication framework, nurses are supported in being active members of the interprofessional team and participating in shared decision-making. The Ask-Tell-Ask model also allows nurses to discover patients' knowledge gaps and provide efficient education.

#### AT A GLANCE

- The five steps of the GUIDE communication framework empower nurses to educate, guide, and support patients and caregivers throughout the cancer trajectory.
- Gaining insight into the patient's goals of treatment and care and understanding gaps in the patient's knowledge allows nurses to provide effective information and education to patients.
- Directing patients and caregivers to additional support, as well as empowering patients by allowing active participation in the shared decision-making and treatment processes, are part of the nurse's role in the interprofessional team.

#### KEYWORDS

oncology; communication; education; patient participation; shared decision-making

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# GUIDE Communication Framework

Developing skills to improve nurse–patient interactions

Nina N. Grenon, DNP, AGCNP-BC, AOCN®, Sven De Keersmaecker, RN, and Fransen McGinley, MHS, PA-C

Nurses are regarded as a point person for patients with cancer, and they empower patients through education, guidance, and support throughout the cancer treatment journey (Komatsu & Yagasaki, 2014; Kruijver et al., 2000). In addition, nurses are active members of the interprofessional team, supporting patients and promoting shared decision-making (Cook et al., 2019).

The GUIDE communication framework was designed to help oncology nurses and advanced practice providers to fulfill their challenging roles so that patients with cancer feel empowered in participating in their treatment-related choices. Although the GUIDE communication framework was developed to improve the benefits of interactions between nurses and patients with colorectal cancer, the communication principles can be more widely applied to interactions with patients with any type of cancer and/or chronic illness.

#### Developing the Framework

The GUIDE communication framework was developed by Gastrointestinal (GI) Nurses CONNECT®, an international group of oncology nurse experts in the field of GI cancers and hepatocellular carcinoma. The members collaborate in scientific activities, share best practices, and discuss the latest scientific and clinical insights. Their goal is to develop

educational programs that support oncology nurses worldwide in providing the best possible care to their patients.

To develop the GUIDE communication framework, a focus group within GI Nurses CONNECT evaluated the most important parts of nurse–patient communication in the oncology setting, with a focus on patients with colorectal cancer. The first step was to gain insight into what makes successful and gratifying nurse–patient interactions and educational relationships. The focus group specified the role that nurses have in communicating with the interprofessional team and the family or support network surrounding the patient. A structured questionnaire was used to gather these insights from the focus group members (see Figure 1). Based on these insights, the focus group developed the GUIDE communication framework materials, including e-learning content, videos showing nurse–patient interactions that used the framework in practice, and a downloadable slide deck.

#### The GUIDE Communication Framework

GUIDE is a communication framework that empowers oncology nurses and advanced practice providers to have better conversations with their patients and to educate and guide patients throughout their treatment journey. Each of GUIDE's five letters represents a step