

**PP 10: Awareness among cancer patients about their disease, management and prognosis**

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**Objective:** To identify the level of awareness among cancer patients about their disease, management and prognosis.

**Design, setting and methods:** A cross sectional randomized study was carried out and the data was collected using an interviewer administered questionnaire from 126 adult patients in the Cancer Institute, Maharagama.

**Results:** Hundred and sixteen of the total population were aware that they were having a disease of which 56 accepted it as a cancer. Local extension was present in 27, but 11 of these patients believed that their disease has not extended locally. Distant metastasis was present in 21 cases and only one patient was aware of this. Out of the remaining 20, 5 patients denied and 15 were unaware of the presence of distant metastasis. Among patients in whom surgery was not an option, 18 believed that a surgery could be done. None of the patients had been given the opportunity to be involved in the management decision. 38 patients had a general idea about their prognosis, of which 23 derived this from their personal beliefs and only 3 patients had obtained this information from doctors.

**Conclusions:** A significant number of patients (55.56%) were unaware about the existing malignancy. Inaccurate information on the stage of the disease and its management was seen among a considerable proportion of patients. Personal beliefs have become the main source of information regarding prognosis and the involvement of a doctor in informing about prognosis seems to be poor.