Geriatric Oncology is a relatively new field in Singapore. The Singapore Geriatric Oncology Society (SGOS) was formed in 2007 with the aim of increasing awareness regarding the care of elderly cancer patients. Since the initiation of the society, we have also embarked on other programs to achieve this aim. The first of which was the initiation of the geriatric oncology service at the National Cancer Centre Singapore. This service has helped hundreds of elderly cancer patients in making more informed decisions on the most appropriate treatment for them to receive and also informed physicians on how best to risk stratify these patients and predict toxicity from chemotherapy.

Education/Research/Clinical Activities

This year we were awarded the INOC grant by MSD. International Neighbour of Choice (INOC) grant is an annual program administered by Merck Office of Corporate Philanthropy since July 2012. This grant is aimed at Non-Profit Organizations or NGOs with interests/experience in health, human, social services and local environmental issues and funding request of up to USD $50,000 per organization will be considered. The programs funded will be assessed and determined to address critical community issues/needs with clear objective/s to improve the quality of life of their local residents.

This year we won the award and will be using it to run 3 workshops in Geriatric Oncology. This program will be conducted with the support of the National Cancer Centre Singapore. The 3 workshops which will be titled “Introduction to Geriatric Oncology” and it will be targeted at 3 different groups of medical professionals. The first workshop will be held on 10th of October, 2015.

This workshop will target the family medicine physicians who are keen to understand their older patients with cancer better. The next 2 workshops, to be held in January and March next year (2016) will target the nurses and the allied health practitioners respectively.

So far the response to the first workshop has been overwhelming. The half day program can be viewed at this website: http://www.nccs.com.sg/education/professionaleducation/Documents/Geriatric%20Oncology%20Workshop/index.html

Conclusions

2014-2015 has been an exciting year for SGOS and the geriatric oncology community in Singapore as a whole. We hope to build on the above workshops and constantly engage the elderly cancer patients in improving their lot.

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