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Gender Specific Medicine and Clinical Trials on Colorectal Cancer: Are Women Less Enrolled than Men or are they More Reluctant to Enlist?

Patrizia Tempia^{1*}, Dania Brioschi^{2*}, Francesca Crivelli³ and Francesco Leone⁴

¹Responsible of the Hospital Psychology Unit, ASLBI, Italy

²Coordinator of the Gender Specific Medicine, Projeetct, ASLBI, Italy

³Clinical Research Coordinator, Fondazione Edo ed Elvo Tempia, Italy

⁴Director of Oncology Department, ASLBI, Italy

Since May 30th 2019 the Gender Specific Medicine has become part of the National Health Plan (2019-2021) in Italy. This new point of view in all medical specialties stems from the growing awareness of the gender differences with the ultimate aim of ensuring the best care to each person, both male and female, further strengthening the “patient centrality” and “therapies customization” concepts. Both in international and national cancer clinical trials the stratification is not expected, then this does not allow us to measure differences in the mechanism of action, metabolism, drug effectiveness and potential adverse events in man and woman. The lower women representation compared to men is also a selection bias in itself. Among the oncological pathologies we have selected colorectal cancer because in this pathology the incidence and prevalence data are comparable in both sexes. From the review of colorectal cancer studies conducted from 2000 to 2019 at the ASLBI, Local Health Unit of Biella, the data confirm that men participate more than women in clinical trials: while 57% of the enrolled population are male, 43% female. The same inequality applies to screened and unrolled patients (58.5% over 41.5%). Thus the analysis of the international literature confirms the figure and it stimulates us to deepen the research on the reasons for this difference. Why are women less enrolled than men? Are women more reluctant to enlist? These questions suggest approaching the problem with a new perspective and analyzing both the experimenter and the enlisted subjects psychological aspects, as well as the social context in which the proposal to participate in the studies takes place. Therefore in order to ensure equal opportunities for participation in studies, the gender-specific approach becomes necessary as new evidence suggesting that the effectiveness, tolerability and toxicity of treatments are different depending on gender.

Biography:

Dr. Patrizia Tempia Valenta graduated in Clinical Psychology at the University of Turin and specialised in Clinical Psychology at Medical School. Currently she holds the position of Director of Psychological Services at the hospital of Biella (ASLBI). In 2007 she founded the Association of Volunteers “Emanuele Lomonaco- Far Pensare” and organized a literary contest “Storie di Guarigione” (Recovery stories”) on psychiatric disease, and “Contaci” a convention on Oncology and correct lifestyle. She promoted a series of plays with some artists, musicians, photographers and theatre-plays on health-care subjects. She was a teacher in several Masters in Psycho-oncology, End-life e Palliative care, and in Life-style coaching at the University of Turin and Novara. She is the author of many articles and books about Psycho-oncology, Chronic diseases and Narrative Medicine. In particular she is co-author of “Le emozioni dei malati e dei curanti” Centro Scientifico ed. 2004; chapter “Le malattie neoplastiche e le malattie croniche ad alto impatto emotivo: La presa in carico globale” with G Ferrandez in *Psicologia e Medicina: vantaggi e prospettive-* F Angeli ed 2015; she edited “Storie di Guarigione” Eventi Progetti ed. 2015; “Storie di Guarigione, dalla malattia psichiatrica grave: Una esperienza collaudata nell’ambito della medicina narrativa” in *Pensieri Circolari, Narrazione, Formazione e Cura – Pensamultimedia* ed. 2015; “La Psiconcologia in Musicoterapia e Oncologia” F Angeli 2015.

Dania Brioschi is an experienced Healthcare Professional with a demonstrated history of working in the hospital & health care industry. She is skilled in Clinical Research, Nursing Education, Medicine, Patient Safety, and Healthcare Information Technology (HIT). She is a strong professional with an Executive Master in Management delle Aziende Sanitarie e Socio Assistenziali focused in Health care management and organisation from SDA Bocconi.