

20
YEARS

Comskil
MSK's Communication Skills Training

Geriatric Oncology

Cognition & Communication



Complimentary Virtual Workshop

This interactive program and skill-building workshop is designed to address communication challenges and barriers when engaging with older cancer patients.



Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center



GERIATRIC ONCOLOGY
COGNITION & COMMUNICATION

Overview

This complimentary virtual program and interactive skill-building workshop addresses key communication challenges when caring for older adults with cancer. Topics will include strategies for navigating conversations with patients, caregivers, and family members; assessing decision-making capacity; and effectively working with interpreters for patients facing both dementia and language barriers. The program will also feature high-level discussions on chemotherapy-related cognitive impairment, the impact of distress and anxiety on cognition, and the diagnosis and management of delirium, dementia, and depression.

Day two features a **Geriatric Communication Skills Training Workshop** that utilizes an immersive experiential learning approach. Participants will have an opportunity to practice newly acquired communication techniques in simulated, clinically relevant scenarios.

Post-Training

Following the two-day live virtual program, participants will receive access to an interactive web portal with program resources, a community message board, and follow-up evaluations for research purposes.

Additionally, over the course of the following year, participants will be invited to attend three 90-minute videoconference sessions. These sessions will provide extended geriatric oncology content, personalized coaching on communication skills, and guidance on applying these skills within their own healthcare settings.

Who Should Attend

The target audience for this program includes physicians, social workers, nurses, physical therapists, and any other healthcare professionals who work with or have an interest in working with older adult cancer patients.

Educational Objectives

By attending this program, learners will be able to:

- Provide an overview of dementia, delirium, and depression, including their detection and management
- Discuss the role of distress and anxiety on quality of life of older cancer patients
- Define decision-making capacity and explain its legal implications
- Identify challenges in decision-making and learn to assess capacity in older adults with cancer and cognitive syndromes
- Recognize ageism and appreciate how it interferes with the medical care of older adults with cancer
- Gain familiarity with the **Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment** as a tool for evaluating cognitive decline in elderly cancer patients
- Understand the principles of shared decision-making in the context of geriatric oncology
- Observe and practice communication techniques for effective interactions with older adults with cancer and their caregivers

Registration

This training program is offered several times a year for healthcare professionals who work with, or are interested in working with, older adults with cancer.

Participants are selected through a competitive application process, and **registration is complimentary for those accepted.**

For additional details and to apply, visit:

msk.org/aging

MSK Faculty



Patricia Parker, PhD

COURSE DIRECTOR

Member; Attending Psychologist;
Director, Communication Skills Training and
Research Program (Comskil)



Koshy Alexander, MD

COURSE DIRECTOR

Assistant Attending Geriatrician
Department of Medicine

Yesne Alici, MD

Clinical Director;
Associate Attending Psychiatrist;
Medical Director,
Biobehavioral Brain Health Clinic
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral
Sciences

Beatriz Korc-Grodzicki, MD, PhD

Former Chief, Geriatrics Service
Department of Medicine
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center;
Clinical Professor, Medicine,
Weill Cornell Medical College

Smita Banerjee, PhD

Associate Attending Behavioral Scientist;
Member, Comskil Laboratory
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral
Science

Ruth Manna, MPH

Associate Director, Patient Experience
Partnerships

Liz Blackler, LCSW, MBE

Associate Director,
Ethics Committee & Consultation Services
Office of Chief Physician Executive

Kelly McConnell, PhD

Associate Attending Psychologist
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral
Sciences

Nessa Coyle, NP, PhD, FAAN

Consultant, Advanced Practice Nurse

Christian Nelson, PhD

Chief, Psychiatry Service;
Associate Attending Psychologist
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral
Sciences

Javier González, MFA

Senior Program Manager,
Language Initiatives

Andrew Roth, MD

Emeritus Member, Department of
Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences

Schedule

The program schedule may be modified as needed.

| DAY 1 | |
|------------|---|
| 8:30 a.m. | Welcome and Orientation Faith Fasakin, BSc |
| 9:00 a.m. | Introductory Remarks Patricia Parker, PhD |
| 9:15 a.m. | Cancer in the Aging: The Field of Geriatric Oncology Koshy Alexander, MD |
| 9:45 a.m. | Identifying and Measuring Depression in Older Cancer Patients Christian Nelson, PhD |
| 10:15 a.m. | Discussion and Q&A |
| 10:30 a.m. | Break |
| 10:45 a.m. | Delirium in the Older Cancer Patient Beatriz Korc-Grodzicki, MD, PhD |
| 11:15 a.m. | Dementia and Cancer-Related Cognitive Impairment in Older Adults with Cancer Yesne Alici, MD |
| 12:00 p.m. | Discussion and Q&A |
| 12:15 p.m. | Lunch Break |
| 1:00 p.m. | Decision Making Capacity: Expert Panel Beatriz Korc-Grodzicki, MD, PhD Liz Blackler, LCSW, MBE |
| 2:00 p.m. | Psychopharmacology for Older Cancer Patients Andrew Roth, MD |
| 2:45 p.m. | Addressing the Language Barrier in Healthcare Javier González, MFA |
| 3:30 p.m. | Break |
| 3:45 p.m. | Introductory Lecture on Comskil Conceptual Model and Communication Skills Training (CST) Patricia Parker, PhD |
| 4:15 p.m. | Responsible Conduct of Research Training and Wrap-up Patricia Parker, PhD Faith Fasakin, BSc |
| 5:00 p.m. | Adjourn |

DAY 2 • Geriatric Communication Skills Training Workshop

Welcome and Introduction

- 8:10 a.m. **Welcome and Orientation**
Faith Fasakin, BSc
- 8:15 a.m. **Introduction to Comskil Conceptual Model and Communication Skills Training (CST)**
Patricia Parker, PhD

Geriatrics 101

- 8:30 a.m. **CST Module**
Beatriz Korc-Grodzicki, MD, PhD
Koshy Alexander, MD
- 9:00 a.m. **Large Group Discussion and Role Play:
Eliciting Barriers in Working with Older Adults**
Smita Banerjee, PhD

10:15 a.m. Break

Cognitive Syndromes

- 10:30 a.m. **CST Module**
Yesne Alici, MD
- 11:00 a.m. **Experiential Small Group Role Play**

12:00 p.m. Lunch Break

Shared Decision Making in Cancer Care with the Older Adult and Caregiver

- 1:15 p.m. **CST Module**
Smita Banerjee, PhD
- 1:45 p.m. **Experiential Small Group Role Play**

3:15 p.m. Break

Breakout Group Rotations

- 3:30 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. Rotation 1
4:20 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Rotation 2 (Groups A and B Switch)

GROUP A

Group Think Tank: Common Barriers to Communication Strategies; Developing Strategies Relevant to Own Clinic Environment

Patricia Parker, PhD
Koshy Alexander, MD

GROUP B

Standardized Patient Assessments and Knowledge Assessment; What Happens Next?

Faith Fasakin, BSc

5:00 p.m. Adjourn

“This course equipped me with the skills to conduct more efficient and effective patient interviews. I learned practical techniques that I plan to implement in a structured way, including the use of age-inclusive language in my communication.”

“The presentations were lively and engaging, with a wide range of perspectives shared by both participants and standardized patient actors. Each speaker brought a unique viewpoint, making the program a true celebration of diversity.”

“The content was highly relevant to my medical practice. It provided valuable, immediately applicable insights to support more accurate diagnosis and treatment. The topics were comprehensive and current, reflecting the latest research. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and to further enhance my clinical knowledge and skills.”

— Attendee Feedback



Accreditation

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

AMA Credit Designation Statement

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center designates this live activity for a maximum of **18.50 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™**. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

ANCC CNE Statement*

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center - Nursing Professional Development/ Continuing Education is accredited with distinction as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Contact hours will be awarded to participants who attend the program in its entirety and complete a program evaluation. **Partial credit not awarded.**

Social Work Accreditation Statement*

This presentation is approved for a maximum of **14 Continuing Education Contact Hours of Live Virtual Training**. Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers #SW-0228.

Continuing Education for Licensed Psychologists in New York State*

This event offers 14 NYS Psychology Contact Hours.

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center is recognized by the New York State Education Department State Board for Psychology as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed psychologists #PSY-0166.

*Not all states accept New York CEUs. Please check with the licensing board in your state for guidance on their acceptance of the credit types offered for this course as designated in the accreditation statement above.

Additionally, Nursing, Psychology, and Social Work contact hours are available for the two-day program only and do not apply to the six follow-up Collaboratory Calls. **AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™** will be offered for participation in the three Post-Training Video Calls.

20
YEARS

Comskil

MSK's Communication Skills Training

Celebrating 20 Years

Since 2005, Memorial Sloan Kettering's innovative **Communication Skills Training Program and Research Laboratory (Comskil)** program has been teaching clinicians, across all disciplines, how to communicate with cancer patients and their families in challenging situations.

As the nation's first formally structured communication initiative at a comprehensive cancer center, the program aims to find the most effective and lasting approaches for guiding clinicians in serving patients across the cancer trajectory.



Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

Continuing Medical Education

msk.org/cme

Instagram ▶ [MSKcontinuingmedicaleducation](#)

LinkedIn ▶ [MSK-CME](#)

Facebook ▶ [MSKCME](#)

X ▶ [MSKCME](#)

Copyright 2026 © Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center