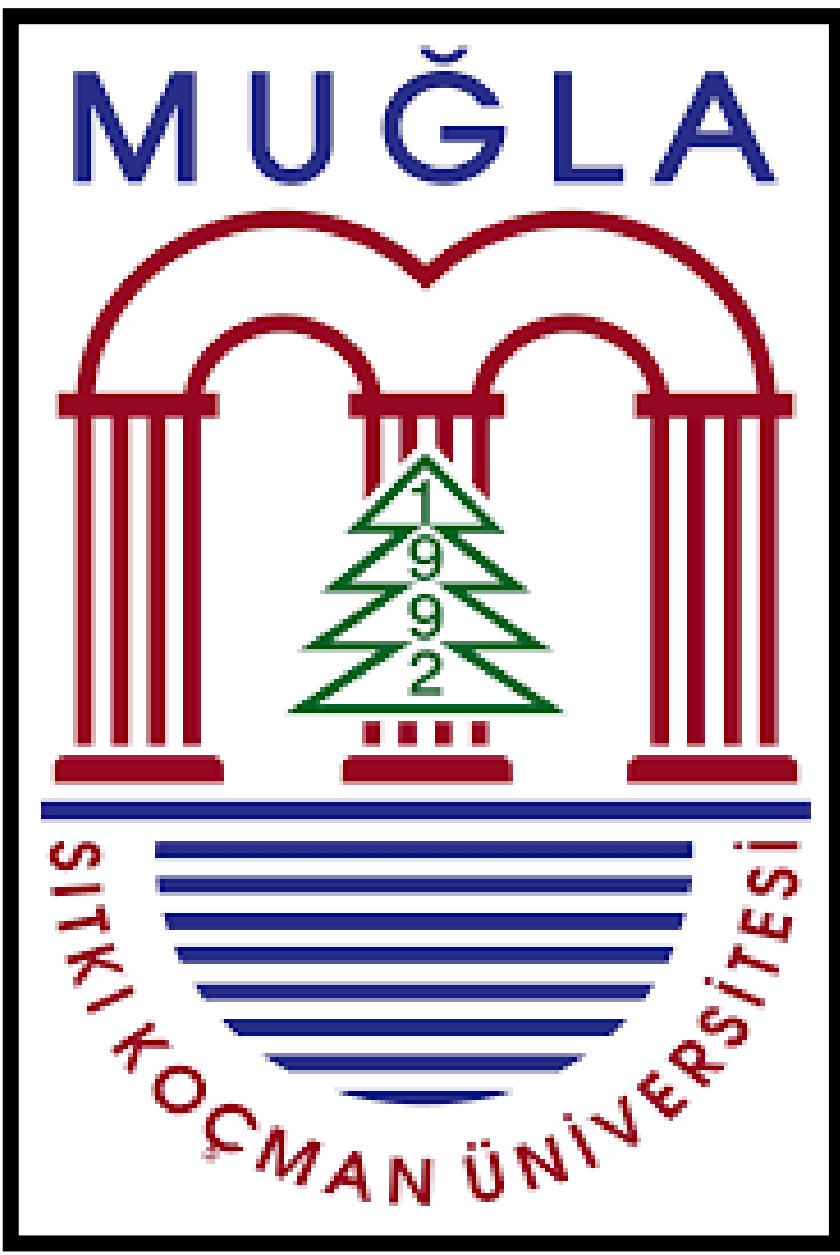




Being a medical oncologist during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Perception, expectations and concerns (OATH Study)



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BACKGROUND

In COVID-19 pandemic, medical oncologists worked actively both in their own fields and in COVID-19 health services. In this process, they made efforts not only to disrupt the medical needs of their patients but also to protect them from COVID-19 mortality with actively or telemedicine integrated.

This study aims to determine both the perspective of medical oncologists on the pandemic process and their profession and their burnout during the pandemic process within the scope of implicit questions.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted between April and August 2020, when the pandemic caused obscurity and devastating consequences around the world.

The study was initiated after the ethics committee and administrative permissions were completed.

760 medical oncologists registered with the Turkish Society of Medical Oncology were asked to participate in the survey by reminding them via e-mail or telephone.

Ethics: The study was initiated after the approval of the Mugla SKU Scientific Research Ethics Committee dated 24.04.2020
Conflicts of Interest: First author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

RESULTS

The number of attendees was 397. The mean age was 47 ± 11 (range 34-68 years), and the mean duration of work in oncology practice was 9 ± 7 (range 1 – 18 years). Most of the participants were women (59%), with academic titles (61%), married (79%), who had at least 2 medical oncologists in the institution was 67%, and have multidisciplinary council were 72%. The mean number of patients per day was 40 ± 11 (range 31- 67).

85% of the participants had sufficient knowledge about the COVID-19 pandemic. The rate of those who were worried about spreading disease to their patients, colleagues and families during the pandemic process was 85%.

Disease anxiety for themselves was 35%. The proportion of those who stated that the pandemic process consumed them was 75%, 67% worried that scientific productivity would decrease, and 76% worried that oncology-releated occupational productivity would decrease.

The rate of those who had a hobby and had to leave it was 92%. When compared with the pre- pandemic period, the rate of those who considered themselves exhausted was 86%.

Items	I strongly disagree	I do not agree	I'm undecided	I agree	Absolutely I agree
I think I know enough about COVID-19	2	4	7	47	337
I think I know enough about ways to protect against COVID-19	0	2	13	37	345
Since I have to actively care for patients and their relatives every day, my risk of getting sick with COVID-19 is higher than other physicians.	4	17	11	48	315
I am worried that if I have COVID-19, the follow-up and treatment of my patients will be affected.	4	6	11	78	295
I'm worried if I get COVID-19 I'll infect my family	0	0	5	5	387
I'm worried that if I get COVID-19, I'll infect my cancer patients	15	25	45	75	237
If I get COVID-19, my cancer patients can receive treatment at another center, so I'm comfortable.	20	47	37	78	215
I feel more exhausted than before in the time that has elapsed since the measures regarding COVID-19 were taken.	15	45	35	98	204

CONCLUSION

It was determined that in the pandemic, the level of burnout of medical oncologists increased and they were more concerned about their loved ones and their patients. It can be concluded that it would be appropriate to develop methods of coping with burnout in the continuation of the pandemic process or in similar conditions.