

The Cédric Hèle Institute: Flemish Institute For Psychosocial Oncology: A Reference For Professionals In Oncology

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PURPOSE

In Belgium there was a need to bundle, expand and improve the psychosocial care in oncology. A lot of caregivers wished to enhance and to improve the quality of their interventions. In an attempt to respond to these needs, a small group of caregivers joined their strengths and knowledge by establishing a multidisciplinary Flemish Institute for psychosocial oncology, called the Cédric Hèle instituut (CHi). All of this found place in corporation with care providers and policy agents.

METHODS

A focus of CHi is to organize and coordinate training in psychosocial care and to create networks of caregivers. The CHi organizes several courses and workgroups for different target groups (doctors, psychologists, social workers, (specialist) nurses. On the CHi-website, information about courses, relevant literature and research is published.

In contacts with the caregivers CHi often observes needs in psychosocial care. Another focus is to indicate these needs to policy agents. CHi was involved in coordination platforms and workgroups of the National Cancerplan of the Belgian government. This Cancerplan wishes to join the competence and expertise of all relevant partners in order to improve the fight against cancer.

RESULTS

131 professionals in oncology participated in one of the 12 CHi courses or workgroups in 2009. In association with the Flemish universities the institute organised again a two-year training in psycho-oncology. In 2010 the government finances the subscription of 75 psychologists.



CHi organized an event on burnout in oncology, 140 participants were present. CHi-website has 2400 visitors per month. The Belgian government provides funding for the development and implementation of a communication training in oncology. CHi will offer this free training to 150 health care professionals.

CONCLUSION

Since its foundation the CHi has become a reference for many professionals in oncology. It's a place where networking and continuing education in psychosocial oncology takes place and is encouraged.

In 2010 the CHi wants to create an internet community and forum to further improve networking and to centralize and gather knowledge and information.

Over the next few years the CHi hopes to become a reference for scientific research in psychosocial oncology in Flanders. We're working on coordinating and encouraging innovating research in the clinic of oncology.