

5-FU Self-Disconnects Educating the Patients



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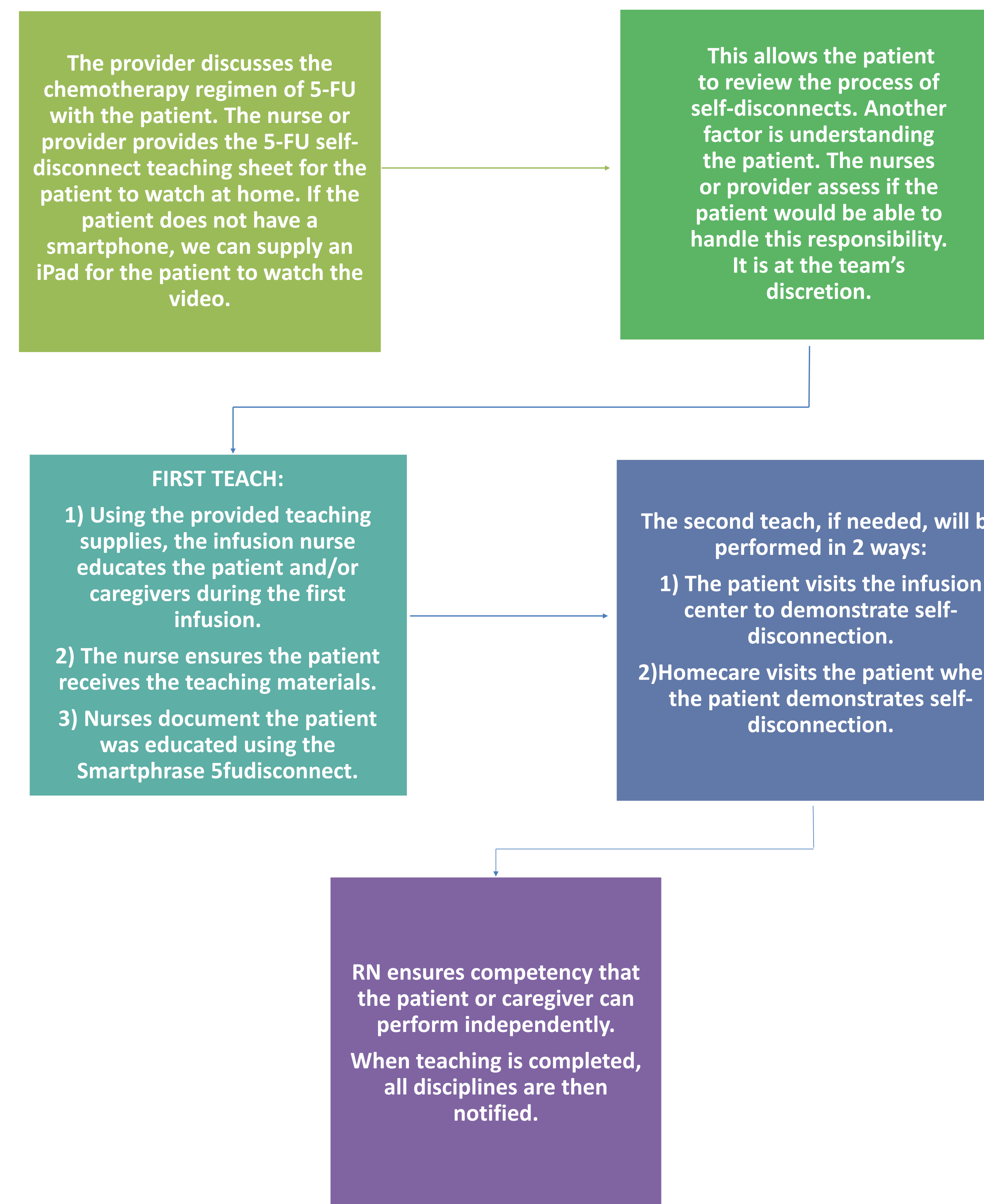
BACKGROUND:

- The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the nursing workforce, with approximately 200,000 registered nurses (RNs) leaving the profession. According to the HRSA Health Workforce (March 2024), "195,292 RNs left the workforce altogether." This loss has made it challenging to find homecare agencies with sufficient nursing staff.
- We have approximately 358 of patients that go home with continuous chemotherapy of 5-FU infusing through a central venous access device.
- Some of these patients live out in the rural areas of town and if unable to get home care they need to drive out to the Wilmot Cancer Center, which can be a 1–2-hour drive.

Purpose:

To alleviate the demand on infusion centers by enabling patients and caregivers with the skills to manage central lines and safely disconnect chemotherapy. Freeing up time and fostering a sense of empowerment in the patients' care.

Methods: We have a standardized procedure to educate patients on self-disconnect's. This process includes comprehensive teaching materials, instructional videos, hands-on training, and accessible resources to address questions related to the chemo pump. Empowering patients to self-disconnect from their chemotherapy infusions, represents a substantial innovation in patient care.



Results: From Redcap survey

- 105 surveys were sent out, we received a total of 46
- Median age: 62
 - Lives alone: 6.4%
 - Do you have the resources you need? 98%
 - How comfortable are you at self-disconnecting? 81% very comfortable
 - Would not recommend this to a family member or friend? 6%
 - Comments:
 - Enthusiastic and positive about the experience
 - Husband does disconnect, "it's very easy", fewer appointments and easier not having someone come to the house
 - "Felt Empowered" having some control over the disease and it is less stressful

Conclusions

- Having the patients empowered to safely self-disconnect themselves decreases the need for home care and the decreases the patient load from the infusion center.
- Empowering patients to self-disconnect from their chemotherapy infusions represents a significant innovation in patient care.
- This approach enhances patient competence by giving them the skills and confidence to manage their treatment, fostering a greater sense of control over their health.



Video of instructions