

# Screening for Distress:

## The Distress Assessment and Response Tool (DART) at Princess Margaret Hospital



PMH

### What is distress?

Life with cancer can be very distressing. Distress may be related to physical symptoms, practical concerns, informational needs, spiritual concerns, emotional concerns or social difficulties. Experiencing distress is a normal reaction, but it can be overwhelming and difficult to manage on your own. You should know that together with your nurse and doctor, PMH has a dedicated team of social workers and psychiatrists who are here to help you with those concerns.

### What is distress screening?

To help improve your overall care at PMH, you will be asked to complete an automated tool called DART (Distress Assessment and Response Tool). DART asks about your experiences with common physical symptoms, practical concerns and emotional concerns. Answering these questions helps your health care team track how you are doing and make sure your most important concerns are looked after.

### How is distress screening done?

At your next hospital appointment, you may be asked to complete an assessment on touch screen kiosks in the clinic waiting area before seeing your nurse or doctor. A report will be printed out right away. This report can be used by a volunteer to give you practical information you may need or to help you talk to your health care team about your concerns. All your information is kept private and becomes part of your medical record.

### How will distress screening help me find the information I need?

This binder contains a lot of information on how to manage your cancer. By completing DART, a volunteer or member of your health care team can point you to useful information in this binder, or give you more information to add to this binder. You can keep all the relevant DART pamphlets in this binder to refer to later.

**This initiative is in keeping with provincial and federal cancer care guidelines.  
For more information, please call 416-946-4501 Ext. 5461.**

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