Abstract
Objective. Assess the prevalence of distress and quality of life of cancer patients over the course of chemotherapy. Method. Longitudinal prospective study addressing 200 patients. The Distress Thermometer (DT) and Functional Assessment of Chronic Illness Therapy-General (FACT-G), as indicators of distress and quality of life, were applied at three points in time during chemotherapy: the first day (T1), half way through the treatment (T2), and last day of medication (T3). Results. The average age was 56.8 years old, and 70% were women while the most frequent types of cancer included breast (30%) and hematological (22%) cancers. The number of patients with a high level of distress statistically decreased over time (T1=41.5%, T2=8.0% and T3=2.5%); consequently, quality of life scores improved (T1=85.6%, T2=90.4% and T3=92.0%). Patients with moderate to severe distress experienced worse quality of life. Distress, type of cancer and disease stage significantly impacted quality of life. Conclusion. There was a reduction in the time of impact from the side effects of chemotherapy in the patients as a consequence of adapting to the diagnosis and treatment. Continuous assessment of the needs of patients is essential to ensuring integral and humanized care, contributing to improved oncological nursing.

Keywords
Anxiety, quality of life, health services, oncologic nursing, neoplasms.