

National Cancer Policy Forum
Workshop on Patient-Centered Cancer
Treatment Planning:
Improving the Quality of Oncology Care

Psychosocial Provider
Perspectives on
Communication

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Cancer is a Crisis for the Patient and the Family

Experts in psychosocial behavior generally agree that the capacity to be self-reliant, to advocate for oneself and to move forward is temporarily diminished by a diagnosis of cancer.

Psychosocial Aspects of Cancer

- Normlessness of the cancer experience
- Problems with reentry
- Employment discrimination
- Living with uncertainty
- Adherence to difficult medical regimens
- Living with loss
- Financial stress
- Changing family roles
- Maintaining a positive future orientation

Communication and
advocacy are
crucial in cancer care.

Barriers to Communication

- Individual barriers
- Family barriers
- Health care provider barriers
- Community barriers
- Policy barriers

Psychosocial health services are psychological and social services and interventions that enable patients, their families, and health care providers to optimize biomedical health care and to manage the psychosocial/behavioral and social aspects of illness and its consequences so as to promote better health.

-IOM Report: Cancer Care for the Whole Patient (2007)

Challenges to Provision of Psychosocial Services

- Workforce shortages
 - Access to services
 - Fragmentation
 - Sporadic delivery
 - Underfunding
 - Lack of reimbursement
 - Insurance confusion
 - Increasingly complex needs of patients
- Need to
recruit,
retain,
and
retrain
workforce**

Patient Self-Advocacy...

- gives stability and a feeling of regaining some control over one's life
- is confidence building in facing challenges that may seem insurmountable
- is a way of reaching out to others
- can improve quality of life
- may be the difference that turns feeling hopeless and helpless into feeling hopeful

Best Practices: Self-Advocacy Tools



Health Professional Advocacy

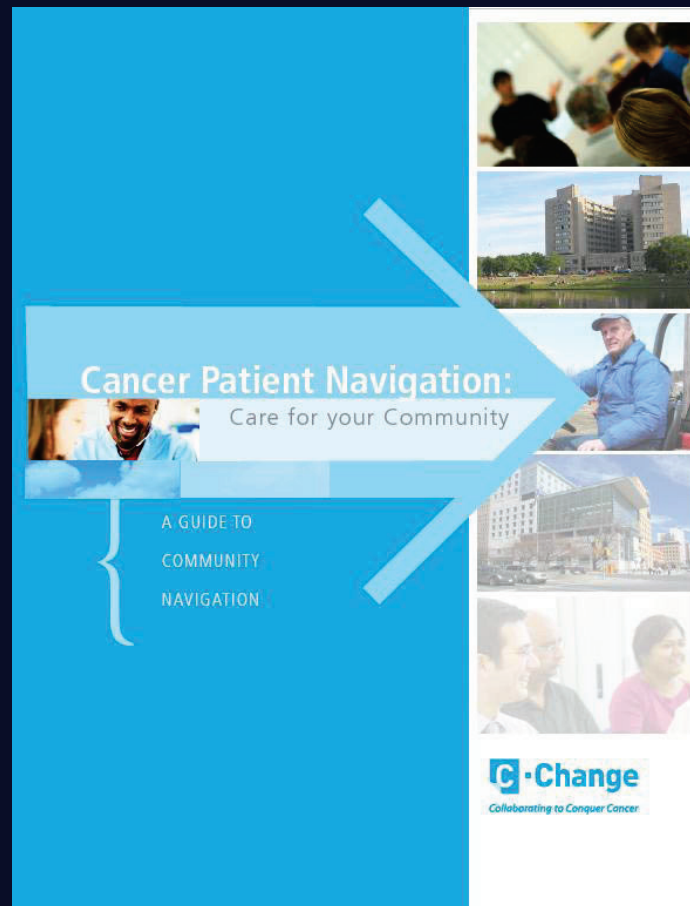
“...it is easy to become immersed in direct service without considering that there is a role for individual workers and their professional organizations in the political sphere. We are obligated to use our professional expertise and clinical experience to systematically influence decision-making for the greater good of our clients.”

(Stearns, 2001)

Best Practices: Patient Navigation

Professional
Navigation

Peer
Navigation



www.cancerpatientnavigation.org

Recommendations

The provision of psychosocial services
must be safeguarded and promoted.

–Imperatives for Quality Cancer Care (1996).

Substantial actions are needed by public
and private entities

–Cancer Care for the Whole Patient (2007).

Recommendations

Build communication channels that link all stakeholders in patient centered care into a participatory community and this will lead to quality cancer care.

Best Practices: Communication



**The National
Transitions of Care Coalition**
www.ntocc.org



**Rush University
Medical Center**
**Enhanced Discharge
Planning Program**
www.rush.edu/rumc

Recommendations

Foster a community of hope:

- Includes trust, openness, and teamwork
- Provides support and continuity of care
- Offers a holistic, strengths-based approach
- Accepts all visions of hope