The Cancer Care Transformation Playbook

Opportunities to Reduce Unwarranted Care Variation in Oncology
Reduce Avoidable ED and Hospital Use

- Tactic 4: Identify Drivers of Avoidable Utilization
- Tactic 5: Encourage Patients to Report Symptoms
- Tactic 6: Dedicate Resources to Urgent Symptom Management
Patients Hesitant to Report Symptoms

Making It Difficult for Programs to Proactively Address Needs

Barriers to Patients Reporting Symptoms to the Cancer Care Team

- Unaware of symptoms or don’t know which ones are worth reporting
- Assume the care team will anticipate and reach out to them about symptoms
- Don’t believe care team is available to help
- Afraid to bother their care team
- Not sure who to call

38% Of active cancer patients do not report symptoms because they do not want to bother their doctor

10% Of symptoms identified by systematic assessment are voluntarily reported to the care team by cancer patients

Make Symptom Reporting Easier

Put the Right Infrastructure in Place

Three Strategies for Cancer Programs

1. Standardized Phone Triage

2. Remote Symptom Monitoring

3. Proactive Support of High-Risk Patients

Source: Oncology Roundtable interviews and analysis.
Hardwire Support for Patients

The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders Maximizes Phone Triage

**Phone Triage at The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders**

- **Patient experiencing symptom**
- **Patient calls centralized symptom management phone line**
- **Dedicated triage RN receives call**
- **RN launches symptom management pathway in Navigating Cancer software**
- **RN advises patient to:**
  - Manage at home
  - Come to office
  - Go to ED

- **Contains 16 symptom management pathways**
- **Prompts RN to ask specific questions to determine severity**
- **Guides RN to document patient response and actions taken**

Source: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, Fort Worth, TX; Navigating Cancer, Seattle, WA; Oncology Roundtable interviews and analysis.
Case in Brief: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders

- Community oncology practice with nine locations and 18 oncologists based in Fort Worth, Texas
- Restructured phone triage system to better manage urgent symptoms and keep cancer patients out of the ED
- Two RNs dedicated to phone triage, use standardized pathways to manage 16 common symptoms
- Partnered with Navigating Cancer to integrate triage pathways into patient relationship management software platform
- Measured phone triage line call volume, speed of symptom management, and estimated cost savings from same-day appointments scheduled as a result of call; estimated that new phone triage system saved them more than $400,000 in one month

1) Body aches, chest pain, constipation, cycle one follow-up, diarrhea, emergency services, fatigue, fever and chills, follow-up, nausea and vomiting, nosebleed, oral problems, pain, respiratory changes, sinus and cold symptoms, transitional care management.

Source: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, Fort Worth, TX; Navigating Cancer, Seattle, WA; Oncology Roundtable interviews and analysis.
Technology in Brief: Navigating Cancer

- Patient relationship management software developed by Navigating Cancer, Inc. headquartered in Seattle, Washington

- Comprised of three components: Care Management (mobile health care tracker, distress assessments, depression screening and follow-up, pain assessment and care plan), Population Care (customizable population segmentation, patient use reporting, OCM reporting, time tracking, insights), and Patient Link (patient education, appointment schedule, intake and registration, patient portal, meaningful use reporting)

- Symptom management pathways in care management component use branching logic to provide clinical decision support for triage RNs; institution-specific standing orders at the end of each pathway empower RNs to work more independently at top of license

Related Resource

For publicly available symptom triage pathways, see COSTaRS’ Remote Symptom Practice Guides for Adults on Cancer Treatments


Oncology Roundtable Related Resource

Urgent Care for Cancer Patients

## A Measurable Impact

### The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorder’s Phone Triage Dashboard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Month of Data</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of RNs dedicated to phone triage</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of oncologists in practice</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of phone calls managed</td>
<td>1,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of symptom management calls</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of calls managed immediately</td>
<td>307 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of calls managed without physician intervention</td>
<td>152 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of calls where same-day appointment scheduled</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$432,000

Estimated savings per month from preventing ED visits and subsequent hospitalizations.¹

¹ Assumed an average cost of $8,000 per ED visit and potential subsequent hospital charges.

Source: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, Fort Worth, TX; Navigating Cancer, Seattle, WA; Oncology Roundtable interviews and analysis.
Put It in Patients’ Hands

CCBD\(^1\) Uses an App to Engage Patients in Symptom Monitoring

**Health Tracker App**

*Patient regularly prompted to input information on:*
- Medication compliance
- Symptoms
- Service utilization outside of treating institution since last appointment

*Triage nurse sees:*
- Dashboard with compiled patient-reported data
- Prioritized list of patients to follow up with based on symptom severity
- Links to relevant symptom management pathway for each patient

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1) The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders.

Source: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, Fort Worth, TX; Navigating Cancer, Seattle, WA; Oncology Roundtable interviews and analysis.
Case in Brief: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders

- Community oncology practice with 9 locations and 18 oncologists based in Fort Worth, Texas
- Partnered with Navigating Cancer to use their patient-facing Patient Link platform component and Health Tracker mobile app for remote monitoring
- Patients receive regular text messages prompting them to complete brief survey on side effects and oral medication adherence; patients who indicate side effects are asked follow-up questions to assess severity and whether they would like help from the care team
- Patients with an upcoming appointment are also asked if they have received medical care for their cancer or other cancer-related issues at another facility, urgent care center, or hospital since their last appointment in an effort to improve care coordination
- Navigating Cancer software compiles patient-reported data prioritized based on symptom severity into a dashboard for triage nurses; triage nurses can click on individual patients to view survey responses and launch the relevant symptom management pathway
- Currently in the process of measuring impact of the Health Tracker app for remote symptom monitoring

Source: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, Fort Worth, TX; Navigating Cancer, Seattle, WA; Oncology Roundtable interviews and analysis.
Put It in Patients’ Hands (cont.)

Technology in Brief: Navigating Cancer

- Patient relationship management software developed by Navigating Cancer, Inc. headquartered in Seattle, Washington
- Remote monitoring system allows institutions to customize scheduling of symptom reporting and oral medication reminders to match any patient’s treatment regimen
- Places certain patients in elevated alert status to trigger more sensitive alerts to the care team, prompting timely follow-up

Source: The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, Fort Worth, TX; Navigating Cancer, Seattle, WA; Oncology Roundtable interviews and analysis.
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