Introduction to **Patient Navigation**

Baptist Health Lexington’s Cancer Program will observe the 10th anniversary of navigation services in 2017. The navigation program began with the establishment of a Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator position in 2007, a position designed to assist with one of Baptist Health Lexington’s largest oncology populations. A Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator has been continuously supporting breast cancer patients since that time.

As designed, the Baptist Health Lexington Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator role is particularly focused on patients during the initial time of diagnosis and treatment. The position has been successful by all accounts and fundamental in the integration of the Baptist Health Lexington Comprehensive Breast Program, a program which has been accredited by the National Accreditation Program of Breast Centers (NAPBC) since initial application in 2010.

The success of the Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator was followed in 2010 with the establishment of both a Lung Cancer and Gastrointestinal Cancer Nurse Navigator. Both additional positions have also been successful and have continuously supported patients in those cancer populations. The Cancer Nurse Navigators cross-cover for each other and assist with the needs of patients outside of their focus area, as do the Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialists.

Navigation programs, such as the program implemented at Baptist Health Lexington, should be patient-centered. A focus on elimination of barriers to the provision of timely and high quality care is essential and as with any patient care initiative, outcomes measures should be reviewed. In this report, the work of the Baptist Health Lexington Cancer Nurse Navigators will be highlighted, including those initiatives that seek to affect patient care quality and outcomes. Two Cancer Committee quality studies from this year will be presented: One highlighting the outcome of patient satisfaction among patients who have had contact with at least one of the Baptist Health Lexington Cancer Nurse Navigators, and another study detailing work necessary for the addition of a new Lung Nodule Clinic.

The concept was developed by the Director of Surgery, Dr. Harold Freeman, who recognized that delayed cancer diagnoses in his patients were related to significant barriers such as lack of health insurance, confusion about proper testing and treatment and distrust of the health system. His pilot navigation program paired patients with a navigator who guided them through the health system and helped circumvent the barriers experienced in cancer screening, offered free and low-cost screening and improved outreach and public education. This original patient navigation model has been copied and adapted widely, with programs implemented as primarily “barrier-focused” or “service-focused” depending on the needs of the specific program and population.
Spotlight on Baptist Health Lexington Cancer Nurse Navigators

Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator

Peggy Wheeler, RN, OCN, CBCN, CN-BN, has worked as the Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator at Baptist Health Lexington since 2010, serving as a resource and confidant to patients with a breast cancer diagnosis. In addition, Peggy assists patients in overcoming barriers and facilitates timely access to care while also serving as a central point of contact for all health care professionals involved with breast cancer care.

Peggy is an advocate, a resource, and a source of constant support throughout each step of a patient's breast cancer journey. Peggy has 11 years of experience in providing oncology nursing care. She holds specialty certification as an Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN®) and Certified Breast Care Nurse (CBCN®) through the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation, and a Certified Navigator-Breast Nurse (CN-BN) through the National Consortium of Breast Centers.

To provide support for all women diagnosed with cancer, Peggy coordinates and leads the Empowerment Series for Women with Cancer, a free series that addresses and honors life concerns with cancer, regardless of where they are being treated. Peggy and another professional who specializes in the evening’s particular topic lead each meeting and participants offer support and encouragement to one another through their experiences.

Peggy also coordinates with programs like the American Cancer Society’s “Look Good, Feel Better” and “Reach to Recovery” and with KY CancerLink for support and assistance for her patients. Peggy serves on the board of KY CancerLink and is one of the leaders of Baptist Health Lexington participation in events such as Komen Race for the Cure and the American Cancer Society Relay for Life.

Lung Cancer Nurse Navigator

In February of 2016, Sara Barker, BSN, RN, OCN, joined the Baptist Health Lexington cancer care team in the role of Lung Cancer Nurse Navigator. As the Lung Cancer Nurse Navigator, Sara serves as a personal resource for patients and families, ensuring that all needs are met and barriers to care are addressed. In addition, Sara works with the multidisciplinary team to coordinate and facilitate lung cancer care, from suspicion of a lung nodule to diagnosis and beyond.

With more than 11 years of experience caring for oncology patients in Central Kentucky, and specialty nursing certification as an Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN®), Sara has been instrumental in developing the Lung Cancer Screening Program and facilitating weekly lung cancer conferences in which lung cancer cases are presented to a multidisciplinary team. Sara works closely with several specialty physicians including those in the Baptist Health Medical Group Medical Oncology and Pulmonary practices as well as Radiation Oncologists and Cardiothoracic Surgeons.

Sara is the coordinator for a new Lung Nodule Clinic at Baptist Health Lexington, which began in December 2016. This weekly Lung Nodule Clinic is an effort to identify patients with suspicious lung findings, navigate referrals to specialists for appropriate assessment and plan recommended follow-up. With more efforts in early detection such as Low Dose Lung CT Screenings and the Lung Nodule Clinic, the Lung Cancer Nurse Navigator role is providing more focus on access and coordination to expert care in an effort to make a meaningful impact on lung cancer prevention, diagnosis and survival.

Sara is also very involved in community education, lending her expertise to the Central Kentucky community by participating in the Lexington KY Free to Breathe 5K and coordinating the Baptist Health Lexington Shine a Light on Lung Cancer celebration. She is also a leader in Baptist Health Lexington’s participation with events such as the American Cancer Society Relay for Life and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Light the Night event.

GI Cancer Nurse Navigator

Alena Glass, BSN, RN, OCN, has been a member of the Baptist Health Lexington cancer care team for 20 years and recently took on the role of Gastrointestinal (GI) Cancer Nurse Navigator in July, 2016. She worked on an inpatient medical surgical unit at Baptist Health Lexington for 10 years, in the Outpatient Infusion department for eight years and then as the Multidisciplinary Oncology Clinic Coordinator before making the transition to the Cancer Nurse Navigator role.

Alena has been a member of several hospital committees including the Magnet Nurse Champion Committee and a Unit-Based Decision Team. She has been a Charge Nurse and a Preceptor for newly hired nurses and a Nursing Clinical Instructor with Midway University.

In her role as the GI Cancer Nurse Navigator, Alena provides patients and caregivers with individualized assistance and support beginning at the time of diagnosis. Referrals to the GI Cancer Nurse Navigator are made by several physicians involved in the care of patients with GI cancer including general and colorectal surgeons, gastroenterologists, medical oncologists and radiation oncologists.

By assisting in the coordination of care, Alena helps the patient move through the healthcare system, ensuring timely access to quality care. Alena likes to focus on community education in prevention and screening in an effort to lower the incidence and mortality from colorectal cancer. Alena also enjoys following up with established patients through the Survivorship Program offered here at Baptist Health Lexington.

Her interest in nursing began when she took care of her grandfather who had a diagnosis of cancer and a sister who eventually passed away with cystic fibrosis. Alena holds specialty nursing certification such as an Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN®) and serves as president of the local chapter of the Oncology Nursing Society.
Cancer Committee Quality Report: The Effect of Nurse Navigators on Patient Satisfaction

To evaluate the care of cancer patients at Baptist Health Lexington, the Cancer Committee conducts a number of quality studies each year. These studies, conducted under the direction of the Quality Improvement Coordinator, are undertaken to review, measure and report on cancer care. In 2016, the Cancer Committee conducted a quality study focused on the oncology navigation program, specifically choosing to review the effect of nurse navigators on patient satisfaction.

Patient satisfaction with care has been proposed as one of the primary, measurable outcomes of navigation. In previous studies, patients have reported high levels of satisfaction with oncology nurse navigators and navigation programs. Although the methods are not consistent among studies, reports have contrasted patient satisfaction among patients who had contact with a navigator and those who did not have contact with a nurse navigator, finding patients satisfaction to be higher among navigated patients.

In 2012, a yes/no question for self-report of contact with a Cancer Nurse Navigator was added to a standardized, outpatient oncology satisfaction survey, providing a mechanism for measuring the effect of navigators on patient satisfaction on an ongoing basis.

This quality study was undertaken to identify if there is a difference in patient satisfaction scores between patients who have had contact with a Cancer Nurse Navigator and those who have not had contact with a Cancer Nurse Navigator at Baptist Health Lexington.

A retrospective review of returned Outpatient Infusion and Radiation Oncology Press Ganey patient satisfaction surveys was conducted for patients receiving services between 01/01/13 and 12/31/15. Surveys were first sorted by the yes/no question “did you have contact with a nurse navigator.”

A review of the literature was undertaken to identify patient satisfaction survey items which may be influenced by contact with nurse navigators. A panel of experts including four Cancer Nurse Navigators (CNN) and two Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialists conducted the literature review and made decisions about exclusion/inclusion of survey questions for analysis. Retained items for analysis included: eleven items related to nursing care, education and counseling, one item related to waiting time between calling and the first scheduled appointment, one item related to care coordination, and two general items “overall rating of care given at this facility” and “likelihood of recommending our services to others.”

Descriptive techniques were used to analyze differences in score means (Table 1) and all-facility rank (Figure 1) between the groups. Mean and standard deviation of all items were contrasted between those patients with and without CNN contact.

For all items, mean scores were higher for the group with CNN contact (n=315) as compared to the group without CNN contact (n=172). Rank as compared to all other facilities was also higher for the group with CNN contact. The largest differences in rank between the groups were found in items related to nursing care, education and counselling including the following: “the degree to which staff addressed your emotional needs,” “staff concern to keep your family informed about what to expect from your condition and treatment,” “staff sensitivity to the personal difficulties and inconvenience that your condition and treatment can cause,” and “quality of care received from nurse.”

Table 1
Comparison of Press Ganey® Patient Satisfaction Mean and All Facility Rank Between Patients with and without Cancer Nurse Navigator (CNN) Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Contact with CNN n = 315</th>
<th>No Contact with CNN n = 172</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional needs addressed</td>
<td>93.4 ± 12.4</td>
<td>91.0 ± 13.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ktp family informed as to expect</td>
<td>94.1 ± 11.8</td>
<td>91.7 ± 14.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensitivity to difficulties/inconvenience</td>
<td>94.9 ± 11.1</td>
<td>92.0 ± 13.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inclusion in treatment decisions</td>
<td>93.9 ± 12.9</td>
<td>92.5 ± 15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home care instructions</td>
<td>93.6 ± 12.7</td>
<td>92.5 ± 15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses concern for questions &amp; worries</td>
<td>98.1 ± 7.5</td>
<td>94.8 ± 12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of care received from nurse</td>
<td>97.0 ± 7.8</td>
<td>96.2 ± 11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained what to expect during Radiation Therapy</td>
<td>95.4 ± 10.8</td>
<td>95.5 ± 11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained what to expect during chemo</td>
<td>96.2 ± 9.7</td>
<td>94.9 ± 14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained how to manage chemo side effects</td>
<td>94.9 ± 11.3</td>
<td>93.9 ± 16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait time: Calling &amp; 1st scheduled appointment</td>
<td>92.5 ± 13.6</td>
<td>91.7 ± 13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care coordinated among doctors/caregivers</td>
<td>95.3 ± 11.5</td>
<td>94.0 ± 13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Care and Likelihood of Recommending Services</td>
<td>96.8 ± 9.3</td>
<td>96.0 ± 9.6</td>
</tr>
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*All facilities percentile rank, N = 318
The Cancer Committee reviewed and discussed the quality study. Recommendations included continued follow-up of patient satisfaction with navigation and consideration of development of additional institution-specific outcome measures or inclusion or other recognized measures if applicable. Research on a national level is currently ongoing regarding ways to measure outcomes of patient navigation but measures are not widely accepted at this point. This study contributes to the body of knowledge about the effect of cancer nurse navigators on patient satisfaction and in measuring differences in patient satisfaction between navigated and non-navigated oncology patients.

References:


A second quality study in 2016 investigated a mechanism for the Lung Cancer Nurse Navigator to identify patients to include in a lung nodule clinic.

At the beginning of the project, there was not a system in place to identify appropriate patients for a lung nodule clinic. The Lung CNN and a team including Administrators in Nursing, Oncology, Radiology, Emergency Department, Information Technologists and Health Information Management specialists provided input and assisted with problem resolution.

The steps involved in assessing the process for identifying patients included a review of the literature and advisory opinions for models, development of an algorithm to map eligible patients from incidental lung nodule findings to lung nodule clinic, meetings with key physicians and experts in the field, exploration of vendor solutions and report capabilities within the Baptist Health Lexington Epic electronic health record and comparison of methods of identifying this patient population with other facilities.

An Epic report to identify cases which would be eligible for consultation in the lung nodule clinic was created, piloted and made available to the Lung Cancer Nurse Navigator in August 2016.

After further refining the report, the Cancer Committee reviewed and discussed the quality study and made recommendations including: continued work with Epic developers to explore further refinement and to develop additional tracking/reporting capabilities within Epic, continued conversation with vendors to explore tracking tools for this clinic and continued collaboration with pulmonary and radiology services to develop streamlined processes to connect incidental lung nodule patients with appropriate follow-up care.
Support for Research and Clinical Trial Accrual
The National Comprehensive Cancer Network believes that “the best care of any cancer patient is participation in a clinical trial.” Baptist Health Lexington is committed to being a leader in clinical cancer research by providing the latest innovations and newest therapies in a community-based setting. The Baptist Health Cancer Research Network offers a variety of Phase II, Phase III and quality-of-life trials for a variety of cancers. The goal of these studies is to find new and/or better ways to prevent, diagnose, treat, and manage diseases. With the help of our patients, the Baptist Health Lexington medical team is able to use the data that comes from clinical trials to grow medical knowledge and improve patient care.

Support for Community Education Efforts
In addition to navigating patients within the walls of Baptist Health Lexington, our Cancer Nurse Navigators extend their expertise into the Kentucky community by developing community education events and participating in community-wide activities including:

- Sun Safety Program at Lexington Public Pools
- Colon Cancer Prevention Project Kicking Butt 5K
- Lung Cancer Alliance Shine a Light on Lung Cancer
- Komen Race for the Cure
- Free to Breathe 5K
- Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Light the Night
- American Cancer Society Making Strides against Breast Cancer
- American Cancer Society Relay for Life
- American Cancer Society Look Good Feel Better
- Kentucky Cancer Link
- Empowerment Series for Women with Cancer
- American Cancer Society Relay for Life
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- Kentucky Cancer Link
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Coordination of Resources
In an effort to intervene where barriers to care might exist, navigators rely on connections with many other professionals on the multidisciplinary cancer team and on resources in the community. Distress assessments by nurses in the treatment setting and individualized assessments by the Nurse Navigators provide information that assists with the provision of counseling from the Oncology Social Worker or a Counseling Psychologist. The Cancer Nurse Navigators also assist with referrals and coordination of Home Health, Physical and Occupational Rehabilitation Services and in a coordinated effort with the Oncology Social Worker, transportation and lodging resources.

At Baptist Health Lexington, dietitians are available to consult with patients in the inpatient setting and in the outpatient medical and radiation oncology treatment settings. Financial counselors are available to assist patients throughout treatment. Genetic Counselors are part of the Baptist Health Lexington Cancer Program and referrals are often coordinated by the CNNs. Fitness and wellness programs and equipment are available as are smoking cessation classes and integrative medicine resources.
Survivorship Care

In 2005, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) released a report raising awareness of the challenges faced by a growing population of cancer survivors. The report, “From Cancer Patient to Cancer Survivor: Lost in Transition,” recommended policy and practice changes to address some of those challenges.

The development and provision of Survivorship Care Plans for cancer survivors after the completion of treatment was one of the recommendations from the IOM report. Intended to serve as a mechanism of communication, these documents should include both a summary of personal cancer treatment and recommendations for future medical surveillance, screening and healthy living.

With the implementation of revised Cancer Program Standards in 2016, development and provision of Survivorship Care Plans are now part of cancer program accreditation from the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (COC). Baptist Health Lexington has a survivorship program in place, including the development and provision of Survivorship Care Plans.

In 2016, more than 25 percent of the Baptist Health Lexington cancer survivors received a Survivorship Care Plan, with planned expansion of more than 50 percent in 2017 and more than 75 percent in 2018. The Baptist Health Lexington Cancer Nurse Navigators are a vital link in the coordination of this process for their specific cancer population. The Navigators work with physicians and the multidisciplinary team to develop individualized Survivorship Care Plans and assist with the provision and patient education that is part of the process of understanding the documents. In addition, the Cancer Nurse Navigators assist with the referral of patients to Survivorship Clinics, which are led by Oncology Advanced Practice Nurses. Survivorship Care Plans are provided to both the patient and the patient's identified primary care provider to facilitate continued and coordinated care.

Patient Education and Counseling

As the name implies, a Navigator serves as a guide. A critical component of guidance in cancer care is education and counseling, something the Baptist Health Lexington Cancer Nurse Navigators are very passionate about. The CNNs are experts in their specialty, and they provide education that best meets the specific needs of that population. A number of organizations produce educational materials the CNNs use to inform patients, but when education materials are not available or do not meet the identified need, the CNNs work to develop what is necessary to ensure patients understand their diagnosis and plan of care.

The Cancer Nurse Navigators listen to patients, family members and providers throughout the continuum of care. While part of their role is to translate and communicate information coming from healthcare providers and from the multidisciplinary team, CNNs also listen and advocate for patients and families as they help translate and communicate on the patient's behalf. Both skills are important in counseling and guiding patients throughout their continuum of care.