

Patient Navigation Program

University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital Cancer Support Group



OVERVIEW: Low numbers of oncologists in Nigeria means that consultations are often rushed and patients are left not fully understanding their diagnosis and treatment options, and with emotional and psychological challenges. This initiative established a patient navigation protocol for HCPs and a unit in the UNTH oncology centre providing support and education for cancer patients.



Area of focus:

Educating patients & HCPs about ABC/mBC



Target population:

Cancer patients in underserved populations and their families/caregivers

Objectives: Provide emotional and psychosocial support, and education to patients with cancer (including ABC/mBC), as well as a forum for them to share common challenges. Educate HCPs in order to improve patient follow-up and eliminate barriers to healthcare

Unmet needs addressed:

- Lack of oncologists in Nigeria, resulting in rushed consultations and poor patient-HCP communication
- Delayed BC diagnosis and treatment initiation, resulting in poor outcomes
- Lack of cancer education and emotional & psychosocial support for patients with cancer

Key components:

- A step-by-step patient navigation protocol for HCPs, from receiving patients to follow-up
- Assessment of patient's needs, and provision of psychotherapy and cancer education for patients

Challenges: There was a lack of personnel to run the initiative and hospital management and colleagues initially required convincing on the need for the patient navigation programme due to its similarities to social work already available at the hospital

Outcomes: The initiative has improved patient-reported QoL and reduced drop-out rates at follow-up appointments

Development: A one-person team leads the initiative, and it required development of patient navigation materials, as well as office set-up in the hospital

Cost: €5,000–€10,000

Timeline: The initiative started in 2017 and is ongoing

Targeted to reach: >300 patients



For more information:

https: www.uicc.org/membership/university-nigeria-teaching-hospital-cancer-support-group-unth-csg

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Based on written submission from Dr. Vitalis Okwor, University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital Cancer Support Group, 2020. The Hard-to-Reach ABC/mBC Communities Toolkit was developed as a collaboration between Pfizer Oncology and the ABC Global Alliance, with funding and support provided by Pfizer. ABC Global Alliance members and Pfizer colleagues were invited to submit breast cancer community-based initiatives that address specific needs of underserved patient populations with advanced/metastatic breast cancer. Initiatives were evaluated against criteria determined by a steering committee with members from both Pfizer and the ABC Global Alliance. Initiatives were selected for inclusion in the toolkit to highlight best practices in addressing the unique needs of this patient population. All organizations who submitted their initiatives for consideration have provided permission for the initiative information to be included in the toolkit and shared publicly. Pfizer and the ABC Global Alliance bear no responsibility for the contents of the toolkit.



Ethnic, religious, indigenous/native population and/or other minorities



Low income patients



Older patients



Rural patients



Low health knowledge patients