The Navigators faced a unique challenge: How to ensure that their patients receive the same level of care and experience across Northwest Community Healthcare? To address this challenge, the Navigators created the Navigator Journal Club, a platform to connect all NCH Navigators to share best practices, and remove any obstacles that could impact patient care or experience. In 2022 NCH joined a larger Healthcare System and expanded the Healthcare system. This provided Navigators with the support and resources they need to ensure their patients receive the highest quality of care.

Background

The Navigator Forum began in 2022. It has been expanded to all sites. A mission statement was created in collaboration with all sites. We use this mission statement as a guide to:

1. Enhance knowledge
2. Evaluate Evidence Based Practice
3. Identify Resources
4. Remove Barriers
5. Evaluate Patient Satisfaction
6. Develop Consistency in Navigator Services
7. Support one another across all sites

Purpose

The aim is to improve patient experience while making their journey through the cancer care continuum more supportive, providing education, increasing compliance, removing barriers, expanding resources while improving quality of care and ensuring support across the system.

Intervention

The Navigator Forum provides a platform for healthcare professionals to openly discuss their concerns and findings solutions to difficult issues they face in the field, which leads to them standardizing their practice to improve patient outcomes.

Project Plan

- Developed a Navigator specific patient satisfaction survey to measure services provided
- Group identified barriers and discussing changes across all sites
- Created the Navigator Journal Club, a platform to connect all NCH Navigators to share best practices
- Northshore Community formulated the Nurse Navigator Journal Club

Evaluation

NCH Ratings based on surveys received in 2022. Ratings are tabulated for the average score. Rating scores are 5=Excellent; 4=Very Good; 3=Good; 2=Fair and 1=Poor; 0=N/A

- The Navigator Forum provides a platform for healthcare professionals to openly discuss their concerns and find solutions to difficult issues they face in the field, which leads to them standardizing their practice to improve patient outcomes.

Practice Change

- Developed a Patient survey in English and Spanish to measure experience with the Navigation Process
- Examples of consistent practices
  1. Connect with patients prior to surgery day and day after post op.
  2. Provide education regarding their disease, treatment and survivorship.
  3. Helps schedule appointments and remove delays or barriers.
  4. Ensure access to patient portal.
  5. Assesses for distress and connects patients to the appropriate resources in: Social worker, financial, psychosocial, support groups, outpatient rehabilitation, nutrition and fitness programs.
  6. Attend consults or first treatment appointments.
  7. Develop long lasting relationships and navigate through patient journey till the end.
  8. Community outreach events to education on healthy lifestyle, cancer prevention and screening events.

Conclusions

The Navigator Forum is an excellent example of how collaboration and communication can lead to improved patient satisfaction. The results of the forum are impressive, with 100% of patients stating that they were satisfied with the Navigator services, they felt supported and that they actually gained knowledge of their disease, treatment and survivorship.

Overall, this quality improvement initiative is an excellent example of how a group of healthcare professionals belonging to a large healthcare organization, can work together to demonstrate a collaborative, supportive work environment to improve the quality of patient care and working environment. This initiative supports moving forward together as a cohesive system.