

# Breast Cancer Navigation: Improving Biopsy Time to Initiation of Treatment

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## Background

At Endeavor Health-Northwest Community Hospital an inspiring initiative was taking shape to improve breast cancer care. The initiative was to redefine the timeline from Biopsy to treatment (time to initiation of treatment) and identify any possible barriers. The initiative was driven by the two Breast Navigators, Quality Program Coordinator and Breast Program Manager to collaborate with the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and Central Scheduling Department. The objective was to prevent delays in care & provide better patient outcomes. According to the National Institute of Health, a delay in starting treatment for breast cancer can significantly impact survival rates, particularly in patients with advance stage cancer. Even relatively short delays can negatively affect outcomes.

## Objective(s)

To decrease time of initiation to treatment for breast cancer patient to less than 27.0 days.

## Methods

Breast Navigators identified a delay in scheduling MRI Breast and MRI Biopsies. Methodology utilized included the following:

- Improve MRI Breast and Breast Biopsies to no more than 7 days.
- Address and escalate any potential delays and inform the MRI scheduler and department.
- The Breast Navigators will track time to schedule and report about the monthly Navigator meeting.
- Identify certain months the MRI schedule may need to add allocation.

## Discussion

The time to initiation of treatment averaged 27 days, with the compliance goal being 21.1 days. The Nurses escalated any potential delays to the Breast Program Manager, who communicated with the MRI Manager. If any delays were identified, the MRI manager would switch patients from the main hospital to off-site to accommodate MRI breast and MRI-guided breast biopsies.

## Results / Conclusion

The collaborative efforts resulted in a remarkable achievement. With the methodology used by the breast navigators, the metric from time to initiation of treatment decreased. The national benchmark per National Accreditation for Breast Centers (NAPBC) is 32 days. With interventions in place, Time to Initiation of Treatment decreased from 27.0 to 22.4 days in 6 months See table below. Results were presented to the Cancer Committee, sparking meaningful discussion on process improvements and setting a new standard for patient care across Northwest Community Hospital (NCH) Breast Program.

## Reference(s)

Ho PJ, Cook AR, Bista Mohamed Ri NK, Liu J, Li J, Hartman M. Impact of delayed treatment in women diagnosed with breast cancer: A population-based study. Cancer Med. 2020 Apr;9(7):2435-2444. doi: 10.1002/cam4.2830. Epub 2020 Feb 13. PMID: 32053293; PMCID: PMC7131859.

## Disclosure

No disclosures.

