Are You Ready for This? Patient Preparedness for Cancer Treatment

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BACKGROUND

Facing cancer treatment can be an overwhelming experience for oncology patients. Those receiving treatment at UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center (UCDCH CCC) are invited to attend a formal class in a classroom setting prior to starting chemotherapy or biotherapy. The class is taught by oncology certified nurses at the Cancer Center. Additionally, one-on-one teaching is provided in the clinic prior to treatment for patients not attending class as well as at the bedside during first treatment.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to assess patient preparedness for treatment and obtain feedback from patients at the onset of therapy and mid-to-late course to identify gaps in education.

DESIGN & METHOD

- Followed A3 problem solving method for conducting QI project.
- Stakeholders included patients, Adult Infusion Room, Cancer Center Clinic.
- Developed a PROM tool to assess patient readiness, satisfaction and learning needs at the Cancer Center.
- Obtained feedback from Cancer Center Clinic Case Manager workgroup prior to data collection.
- Questionnaires were disseminated in two cohorts. One group included patients prior to starting therapy and the second group included patients mid-to-late course.
- Data collected from 101 patients and summarized using Excel.

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FINDINGS

The project identified factors that influence patient education needs. Limitations include difficulty in distributing paper questionnaires and the small sample size to make decisions for amending patient education.

- **Pre-Treatment Cohort - 29**
  - 76% were offered pre-treatment education classes
  - 40.7% felt well prepared to start treatment
  - 20% visited the Cancer Center Resource Room
- **Mid-late Treatment Cohort - 72**
  - 65.3% used the chemotherapy binder, however 23.5% of patients did not receive one
  - 53.7% felt very satisfied with education provided
  - 43.1% of patients would like a call from RN each cycle vs 30% who received a call each cycle
  - 36.6% would consider other formats for classes
  - 25.4% visited the Cancer Center Resource Room during treatment

PLAN FOR CHANGE

In response to feedback expressing interest in web-based formats for education, the chemotherapy class is being offered as a virtual class via WebEx.

CONCLUSION

Feedback collected using the PROM questionnaires from patients on a cancer therapy treatment plan provided valuable information needed to identify gaps, improve patient satisfaction, and modify education provided to promote readiness to start chemotherapy or biotherapy.

NEXT STEPS

This work was important to determine patient education strategies or changes helpful to our patients. The council plans to explore or pilot changing the workflow to call patients after each treatment cycle for disease groups that felt this was important.