



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Patient Navigation: Early engagement and empowerment program for newly diagnosed cancer patients & carers

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Introduction

There are more than 2400 patients diagnosed cancer every year in HKEC. As we all know, new cancer patients need to face a lot of physical pain and intense psychological disturbance that are unavoidable. They felt frustrated at the start in adjusting to the diagnoses, and especially encountered complicated work flow and procedures as caused by scattered location of different departments in hospital. We initiated the “New Cancer Patient Navigation (NPN)” in collaboration with clinical oncology department to enhance support to the patients and carers, addressing their needs and avoiding such difficulties. The project aimed to provide a one-step hospital orientation to these needy new patients and carers through mobilizing peer cancer patients as “Patient navigators” to provide peer support.

Objectives

- To facilitate the patients’ acquaintance on treatment locations and the flow of treatment and rehab before receiving treatment.
- To strengthen patients’ mutual support network to facilitate peer sharing on disease knowledge and coping skills
- To enhance patients’ confidence in facing the treatment
- To facilitate the patients’ understanding available resources for newly diagnosed cancer patients

Methodology

- A service protocol was developed by Clinical Oncology Department (ONC) and Cancer Patient Resources Centre (CPRC). ONC would refer all newly diagnosed patients to CPRC through OPAS system for the NPN program
- CPRC recruited a group of peer volunteers to lead the program, provided training on physical setting, administrative procedure and service skills for support patients in

overcoming difficulties in coping with cancer.

The program is run in weekly by CPRC social workers and peer volunteers, peer volunteers guide new patients to different departments and go through the related to treatment and rehabilitation procedures. Peer volunteers share their experience with new patients on the way.

Result

From December to Feb 2017, a total of 164 patients were referred by Clinical Oncology Department and 6 NPN program were delivered by Cancer PRC. There are 106 participants, which included 71 patients and 35 attended the NPN program. A total of 51 evaluation questionnaires were collected. The attendance rate is 65% in average.

According to the evaluation results, all participants agreed that the program facilitated the acquaintance in physical setting and administrative procedure

100% participants agreed that the peers sharing improved their confidence in treatment and coping with cancer. All participants also agreed that the NPN program is a service platform for connecting cancer patients and carers with hospital and community resources for further rehabilitation.

Conclusions:

The New Patient Navigation program empowered newly diagnosed patients and carers on adjustment on cancer and psychosocial support. With promising results, it fostered HOPE all along their rehab process and contributes the improvement in their quality of life.