



Implementation of the patient Navigation Encourage the treatment willingness of cancer in a regional hospital

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Background

According to the latest statistics from Taiwan's Ministry of Health and Welfare in 2022, cancer has been the leading cause of death in Taiwan for 40 years, and both the incidence and number of deaths have been increasing rapidly each year. After being diagnosed with cancer, patients often refuse follow-up treatment due to work factors, old age, or other reasons, which reduces the overall survival rate and increases medical costs.

Purpose

Our hospital is a regional hospital in Taiwan, and in 2018 the cancer retention rate was 79%. The reasons for not receiving treatment were explored as: (1) being transferred to a medical center, (2) being transferred to another regional hospital, and (3) refusing or not having time for treatment due to age or fear of treatment. We hope that through the guidance of cancer case managers and the integration of our team, we can assess the physical, mental, and social needs of patients and refer them to appropriate care in order to provide them with comprehensive care and effectively improve their compliance with medical instructions, thereby increasing the overall survival rate.

Method

In order to provide a more comprehensive and high-quality cancer treatment model, our hospital has specialized physicians and oncology case managers to assist in integrating medical team resources, enhancing the quality of cancer patient care services. We proactively provide cancer treatment handbooks to patients during follow-up visits and frontline treatment and care information so that we can reduce the probability of patients refusing treatment.

We also provide multiple medical information for patients to choose appropriate treatment and introduce shared decision-making based on the guidelines. When a patient is found to refuse treatment and does not return for follow-up, we will regularly care about patient's condition according to the tracking method. An oncology case manager provides personalized assessments and cross-team referrals based on the patient's condition, such as referrals to oncology psychologists, social workers, hospice caregivers, dietitians, and radiation therapy educators. Through a comprehensive service, the manager can identify patient care issues and eliminate factors that may cause treatment refusal. Our goal is to provide high-quality patient care. Our hospital participates in the SNQ national quality certification, including the continued promotion of the Cancer Patient Navigation System, comprehensive oral care for cancer patients by an interdisciplinary team and precision radiation therapy for breast cancer. Through Cancer Patient Navigation System, we strive to improve patient retention rates and increase overall survival rates after standard treatment.

Results

The treatment rate was 78% in 2020, 79% in 2021, and 82% in 2022, and the completion rate was 100%. As of the end of 2022, the patients satisfaction rate reached over 95%. Ta-Tung hospital also obtained the symbol of national quality and the certificate of cancer treatment in 2019.

Conclusion

Due to implementation of patient navigation, Ta-Tung hospital can satisfy patients and give them confidence to complete treatment at the hospital. This has led to an increase in the treatment rate, and the hospital has received recognition for its quality of care.