



PATIENT NAVIGATOR



Levine Cancer Institute

WHAT IS A PATIENT NAVIGATOR?

Patient navigation in cancer care refers to individualized assistance offered to patients, families, and caregivers to help overcome health care system barriers and facilitate timely access to quality medical and psychosocial care from pre-diagnosis through all phases of the cancer experience. In short, patient navigators literally navigate patients and their families through the complex system of healthcare so that they can focus on their care, *not the process*. The patient navigator becomes engaged with the patient soon after a cancer diagnosis.

The patient navigator will:

- Provide education regarding diagnosis and treatments
- Link patients to available resources in their local community for additional services
- Provide the latest information on changes in cancer care
- Conduct educational classes/talks
- Serve as a resource for disease specific cancers
- Provide education on the early detection of disease specific cancers
- Facilitate multidisciplinary consults and tumor conferences by assisting with selection of patients to be discussed and prepare concise comprehensive case summaries
- Assist with the transition to survivorship programs



Carolinas Healthcare System's (CHS) Levine Cancer Institute has made a commitment to the patient navigation program by providing the on-going training and education needed by patient navigators to ensure they are fully equipped to help patients.

The Institute has developed an academy dedicated to patient navigators that provides

a forum for best practice sharing and has launched a standard program that can be expanded as the Institute grows. The goal is to ensure the continuum of oncology care provided across the system is as seamless as possible.

"Cancer treatment is like a rollercoaster, but my patient navigator made the journey much smoother. From scheduling appointments and helping me with paperwork, to emotionally supporting me during some tough moments, she was there every step of the way."

*Stephanie Auten,
breast cancer survivor*

HOW DOES NAVIGATION MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Navigation and navigators have a direct effect on patient care by:

- Connecting patients to appropriate resources such as:
 - Accessing safety net facilities
 - Identifying a medical home
 - Advising and assisting patients on how to claim insurance benefits
- Coordinating communication between medical professionals and patient
- Providing education on cancer and patient risks
- Becoming the trustworthy and consistent face of the health care system

THE OUTCOMES OF PATIENT NAVIGATION ARE:

- Improved rates of screening and follow-up
- Lowered clinical stage of presentation
- Improvements in completion of treatments and reported levels of increased psychosocial support
- Higher patient satisfaction
- Increased ability to engage, track, and support patients
- Increased enrollment and retention into clinical trials



Watch this video of a patient navigator at Levine Cancer Institute. Scan this QR code using a free QR reader app on your Smartphone.

"Cancer changes you emotionally, physically, spiritually; it's so important to talk about it, support each other and celebrate survivorship."

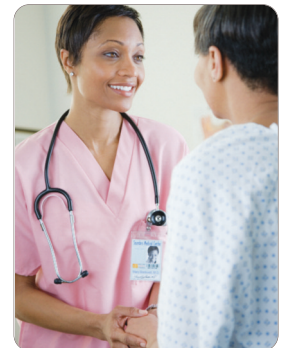
*Vicki Neer,
ovarian cancer survivor*

THE BENEFITS OF PATIENT NAVIGATION FOR PATIENTS INCLUDE:

- Emotional support
- Patient education
- Seamless and efficient care
- Eliminate barriers to access
- Link to community resources
- Schedule appointments
- Help with paperwork

THE BENEFITS OF PATIENT NAVIGATION FOR HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS AND PHYSICIANS INCLUDE:

- Enhanced communication within system and between physician providers
- Timely and appropriate referrals to specialists and specialty services
- Improved patient satisfaction



WHERE DOES LEVINE CANCER INSTITUTE HAVE PATIENT NAVIGATORS?

The Institute has several patient navigators at the following cancer programs:

- AnMed Health – Anderson, SC
- Batte Cancer Center
at CMC-NorthEast – Concord, NC
- Blue Ridge Health Care
Valdese Hospital – Valdese, NC
Grace Hospital – Morganton, NC
- Cleveland Regional Medical Center – Shelby, NC
- CMC-Lincoln – Charlotte, NC
- CMC-Mercy – Charlotte, NC
- CMC-Pineville – Charlotte, NC
- Edwards Cancer Center
at CMC-Union – Monroe, NC
- Levine Cancer Institute – Charlotte, NC
- Roper St. Francis – Charleston, SC
- Stanly Regional Medical Center – Albemarle, NC

In addition to our General Patient Resource Navigators we have navigators specifically trained for Immunotherapy treatment and for the following cancers:

- Breast
- Colorectal
- Genitourinary (GU)
- Gynecologic
- Head and Neck
- Lung

It is our belief that when patients and medical professionals work collaboratively as a team, it is a more favorable experience for all. Leading research supports this. **“Quicker care can lead to better outcomes,”** states Maureen Larkin in Healthleaders*. The Patient Navigator program at Levine Cancer Institute has been established specifically to lead to both.

**(Larkin, M. (2008). Navigating the maze. Healthleaders, 49-50.)*





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www.levinecancerinstitute.org