Building a New Oral Anti-Cancer Medication Nurse Navigation Program

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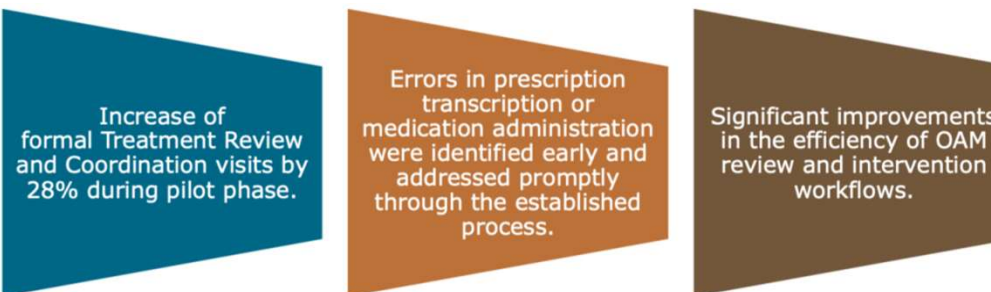Lance Ortega, MBA, BSN, RN, OCN; Calliope Bodenhorn Payne, BS

BACKGROUND

- Texas Oncology sees over 70,000 new cancer cases annually across all practices in the state. With an increasing number of oral cancer therapies being introduced, there is a growing population of patients who need additional support to ensure adherence and tolerance to the treatment.

- These patients face challenges such as symptom management, handling of cytotoxic medications and ensuring compliance.

- Unlike patients who receive intravenous chemotherapy, patients prescribed oral therapies were not always receiving the same level of guidance and frequently lacked clear understanding of treatment expectations.

- Lengthy delays in oral therapy initiation were also noted due to insurance requirements and financial burden.

METHODS

- Selected one region in the state as a pilot, consisting of 20 locations and 60 physicians.
- Educated key stakeholders (pharmacy staff, physicians, clinic staff, etc.) on the new program.
- A report was created to identify all newly prescribed oral anti-cancer medication (OAM) prescriptions.
- Developed a workflow to address any potential errors in transcription or administration to ensure required elements and patient-centered interventions were implemented. Reported safety concerns through internal variance reporting system for tracking and assessing for quality improvement initiatives.
- Utilized an existing electronic patient reported outcomes (ePRO) platform and the Texas Oncology virtual nurse triage team to assist with timely intervention for symptom management.

RESULTS

Increase of formal Treatment Review and Coordination visits by 28% during pilot phase.

Errors in prescription transcription or medication administration were identified early and addressed promptly through the established process.

Significant improvements in the efficiency of OAM review and intervention workflows.

CONCLUSIONS

- The creation of a Virtual Oral Anti-Cancer Medication (OAM) Nurse Navigator program, specifically for patients on oral cancer therapies, improved their understanding of potential side effects and how to manage them.

- The early identification and resolution of errors in prescription transcription and administration enhance overall patient safety.

No references to disclose. Study resources and methods conducted through Texas Oncology.

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