



Coordinating the Team

PAID PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

Cancer survivors have a health care team behind them, but how does that team come together? Who is on it, and how do you keep everyone on the same page? That's where patient navigators come in.

Even before diagnosis, patient navigators can help you coordinate any needed appointments, scans, consultations, and procedures, at a time when quick action and decision making are key. RBOI's patient navigators are available, at no cost to you or your insurer when you have a suspicious test result for cancer or a newly discovered cancer and aren't sure what to do next.

Cancer treatment affects not only you and your loved ones but your entire health care team. Health care providers outside of oncology may need to know how cancer and cancer treatment affect patients. Our navigators can help make sure that everyone has the information they need to meet your health care needs, including your primary care physician and any specialists you may see for other medical conditions.

RBOI's licensed clinical social workers can connect you, family,

and caregivers with survivorship programs and resources. Amy Roberts, LCSW, and Wendy Hall, LCSW can help guide you from pre-diagnosis through treatment. Patient care assistant Michelle Jackson can help you navigate survivorship care after treatment. A compassionate, professional staff member will always answer your call during business hours.

Help for a Complicated Disease

Cancer differs from other medical conditions in several ways:

- It's complex, not just one disease but many diseases with different types.
- It can involve different kinds of treatments that affect different parts of the body.
- It's multidisciplinary, involving surgeons, medical oncologists, and radiation oncologists. Other



specialists may be needed to treat side effects.

- It can be toxic, affecting the heart or other major organs, sometimes years after treatment.
- It's expensive and can result in financial stresses affecting quality of life.

While RBOI's patient navigators coordinate your medical team, our clinical social workers can:

- Help you understand what to expect moving forward.
- Provide resources to help you communicate and manage the information your medical team gives you.
- Connect you to literature, educational materials, and resources along the way.
- Match you with another cancer survivor who shares a similar diagnosis and experience.
- Provide counseling for you and your family as you manage the emotional impact of a new diagnosis.
- Link you to practical assistance programs to help with financial concerns, transportation, disability, and more.

1990

Establishment of the first patient navigation program in the US, by Harold P. Freeman, MD, at a public hospital in Harlem, NY

50 million

Americans without health insurance, according to the 2010 US Census Bureau report

8,200

Patient navigators belonging to the Academy of Oncology Nurse and Patient Navigators (AONN) in 2019

2015

The Commission on Cancer adds patient navigation as a standard for program accreditation

Mission One: Accessing Care

Individuals with cancer, along with their families and caregivers, are always at the center of cancer care. Patient navigators understand the medical system and its complexities, which can often create barriers to that care. Those barriers can include:

- Lack of transportation.
- Lack of care for children or elderly relatives.
- Not understanding why one should get screened.
- Language difficulties.
- Mistrust of the health care system.
- Fear of finding out one has cancer or fear of the screening procedures.

Patient navigators reduce or eliminate those barriers by connecting patients and their supporters with the resources they need. This can be especially important for people who have less access to health care and other services, such as racial and ethnic minorities and those living in rural communities.



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