Care for a Cancer Patient as a Project

Managing Complex Task Interdependence in Cancer Care Delivery

Julia Trosman / Christine Weldon, on behalf of the ECOG-ACRIN Writing Team
Learning Objectives

After reading and reviewing this material, the participant should be able to:

• Recognize the importance of Task Interdependence in cancer care delivery

• Identify key aspects of managing Task Interdependence for cancer patients

• Understand the potential for managing patient’s care as a project
Outline

• Task Interdependence: a key Teamwork principle

• Patient Case Study
  – Care breakdowns when Task Interdependence is not managed

• Addressing Task Interdependence with Project Management
  – Why Project Management
  – How it can help to address issues

• Our question to the audience
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Comprehensive Cancer Care

The example of breast cancer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cancer Treatment</th>
<th>Radiology &amp; Imaging</th>
<th>Pathology and Diagnostics</th>
<th>Surgical Oncology</th>
<th>Surgical Reconstruction</th>
<th>Medical Oncology</th>
<th>Radiation Oncology</th>
<th>Primary and comorbidity Care</th>
<th>Clinical Trials</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive care (Patient’s autonomy, productivity)</td>
<td>Family / caregiver support</td>
<td>Work productivity; Education, retooling</td>
<td>Logistical support (transportation, housing, other)</td>
<td>Occupational therapy</td>
<td>Self-care and self-sufficiency</td>
<td>Access to care and financial viability</td>
<td>Child and family care</td>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Patient view of cancer care**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient/ Family</th>
<th>Primary Care Physician</th>
<th>Radiologist</th>
<th>Breast Surgeon</th>
<th>Plastic Surgeon</th>
<th>Genetic Counselor</th>
<th>Medical Oncologist</th>
<th>Radiation Oncologist</th>
<th>Nutritionist</th>
<th>Reproductive Specialist</th>
<th>Nurse Practitioners</th>
<th>Navigators</th>
<th>Social workers</th>
<th>Patient Advocacy</th>
<th>Case Manager</th>
<th>Health Plan</th>
<th>Pharmacy Benefit Mgr</th>
<th>Specialty Pharmacy</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Different settings, organizations, localities**

Complexity and fragmentation of care across domains, practices, institutions

Many key care events are interdependent, but relative timing / sequencing is not recognized or managed
Task Interdependence:

The degree to which the **systematic interaction** and **coordination** of team members are required to complete tasks

**Key aspects**

- Timing and sequencing of interdependent tasks
- Formal responsibilities for interdependent tasks
"Rebecca is a type of Everywoman, a composite representing the complex odyssey with which breast cancer patients find themselves confronted—one that is far too often filled with twists, turns, and multiple diverging roads where, as each path is chosen, there is no turning back. Each member of a cancer patient’s healthcare team plays a critical, interdependent role, as does the patient herself, in helping her navigate her path safely. All must be cognizant of the patient’s desired destination and together help her to avoid the potential irrevocable detours that could steer her far off course and to progressively navigate toward and ultimately reach the objectives she envisioned at the beginning of the long passage behind her."

Debra Madden, NCI/ASCO Teams’ Member, Breast Cancer and Hodgkin’s Lymphoma Survivor, Cancer Research Advocate
Case Study: Rebecca Smith

• 32 yo, newly diagnosed with Stage II breast cancer

• Task Interdependence (timing & sequencing of care events; clear responsibilities) was not managed in:
  – Neoadjuvant therapy
  – Genetic testing
  – Fertility preservation
  – Dental care

Result: care was delayed or entirely missed / forgone
Ex: Genetic testing prior to BC surgery

Task Interdependence is not managed

Diagnosis delivered by PCP

Imaging / diagnosis

Surgical appt; Referral to Genetics

Genetic Counseling appt; test order

Surgery scheduled

Breast conserving surgery

Test result sent to Genetics

Genetics calls patient to come in

Prophylactic bi-lateral mastectomy after systemic therapy

Ex: Genetic testing prior to BC surgery

Task Interdependence is not managed
Ex: Genetic testing prior to BC surgery

Task Interdependence is managed

- Diagnosis delivered by PCP
- Imaging / diagnosis
- Surgical appt
- Genetic Counseling appt; test order
- Test result sent to Genetics
- Genetics calls patient to come in
- Surgery scheduled
- Breast surgery; surgical strategy incorporates genetic results; patient wishes
- Further care

Presented by: Julia Trosman & Christine Weldon on behalf of the ECOG-ACRIN Writing Team
Using Project Management to Manage Cancer Care Task Interdependence

- Effective to manage complex projects with dynamic, multi-disciplinary teams and task interdependencies
- Inherently manages timing / sequencing, responsibilities for interdependent tasks
- Familiar to providers and many patients
  - Used in many industries, including healthcare (e.g., quality improvement projects)

4R = Right Information, Right Care for the Right Patient at the Right Time
4R: Care for cancer patient as a project

- Care project plan developed at diagnosis, managed as needed
- Based on templates for patient subgroups
- Timing, sequencing, dependencies of key care events
- Integrates care and support services for medically underserved
- Clear responsibilities, including patient / family
- Lead Physician: Care Team Lead, supported by Care Organizer
Question for the audience

How can we make the concept of care project plan simpler and more pragmatic for patients and clinicians?