

Access to Nutrition Care in Outpatient Oncology

EXAMINING CHALLENGES

There is growing recognition of the importance of nutritional care in optimizing treatment and improving quality of life for cancer patients and survivors. There is also growing concern about access to nutritional care in outpatient settings, which is where approximately 90 percent¹ of cancer patients receive care.

Participants at a 2016 workshop convened by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine explored challenges around the evolving interactions between nutritional care, cancer, and health outcomes in the outpatient setting. Here's what they had to say.

¹ Elaine Trujillo

CHALLENGE

Accessing Outpatient Nutrition Care



Outpatient oncology centers aren't required to have RD/RDNs on staff or dedicated space for them to meet with patients.

-STEVEN CLINTON



Inpatient dietitians often have more work than time. **-RHONE LEVIN**

CHALLENGE

Exploring Models of Nutrition Care

SUCH AS...

Nutrition screening tools and practice

Toolkits that enable patients to find local dietitians

Multidisciplinary rehab clinics with teams that include dietitians

-LIZ ISENRING



CHALLENGE

Gathering Information on Benefits of Nutrition Care

OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE...

Adding this information to electronic health records **-WENDY JOHNSON-ASKEW**

Taking into account not just payer costs, but also employer and employee costs **-JIM LEE**

Combining clinical outcomes with budget effects rather than conducting full cost-benefit analyses

-JIM LEE



CHALLENGE

Improving Costs and Benefitting Patients



OPPORTUNITY IN REIMBURSEMENT MODELS...

Better incorporate nutrition care

-STEVEN CLINTON



OPPORTUNITIES IN WORKPLACES...

Offer coverage with cancer care centers of excellence

Provide care management programs, employee assistance programs, health improvement programs, and concierge service to employees

-BRENNA HAVILAND SHEBEL

CHALLENGE

Communicating About Benefits of and Access to Nutrition Care

By focusing on "healthy lifestyle" or "nutrition" rather than "weight loss" **-CHERYL ROCK**

By educating the public about the link between obesity and cancer **-CHERYL ROCK**

By involving communities in improving access to healthy, affordable fruits and vegetables **-COLLEEN DOYLE**

By engaging cancer survivors as advocates for change in their communities **-COLLEEN DOYLE**

By finding common ground for physicians and nutritionists to discuss care **-JOAN MCCLURE**



Learn more about the discussions at the National Academies workshop, and download the proceedings for free, at:

nationalacademies.org/OncologyNutrition

Statements, recommendations, and opinions expressed are those of the individual cited participants. They are not necessarily endorsed by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine and should not be construed as reflecting any group consensus.

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