An Overview of Patient Navigation and Competencies

Social Determinants of Health
Conditions in the environment where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that directly influence health outcomes.

Cancer Health Disparities
Adverse differences in the burden of cancer that exist among specific population groups.

Education Access and Quality

Health Care Access and Quality

Neighborhood and Built Environment

Social and Community Context

Economic Stability

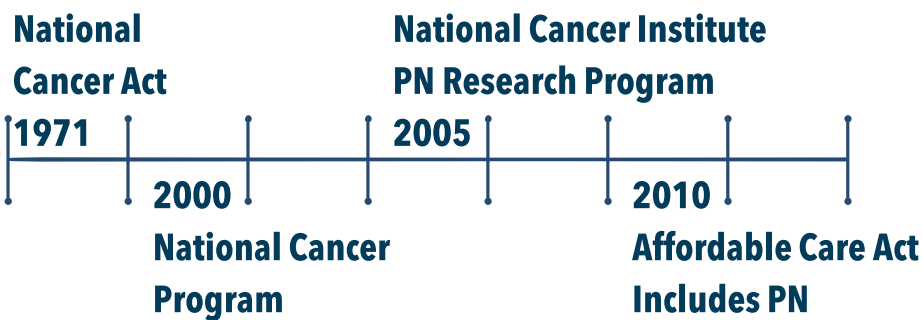**Social determinants of health grouped by domain**

Patient Navigation (PN)
An intervention that addresses barriers to quality standard care by providing individualized assistance to patients, survivors, and families.

Models of PN
PN programs vary by the type of organization, cancer, patient, and point in the continuum of care.

2014
George Washington (GW) Cancer Institute (now GW Cancer Center) publishes Core Competencies for Non-Clinically Licensed Patient Navigators

PN History

National Cancer Act 1971

National Cancer Institute PN Research Program 2005

2000 National Cancer Program

2010 Affordable Care Act Includes PN

Core Competencies
Create professional standards, provide a framework for training, and clarify function and importance to grantors, organizations, payers, and policymakers.

Key Takeaway
GW Cancer Center created the first consensus-based competencies for patient navigators .

Module 3 Lesson 1
Medical Terminology

Prefixes, Roots, and Suffixes

Most medical and scientific terms will have three parts (prefix, root, suffix) and may seem complex but they can be broken down into parts to give a basic idea of what they mean.

A prefix helps to describe the location, direction, amount

Prefix	What It Describes	Example
Epi-	Upon	Epidermis = the outer layer of skin
Sub-	Under, below	Submucosa = tissue below mucus membrane
Hyper-	Excessive, above	Hyperglycemia = excessive blood sugar levels
Hypo-	Beneath, below	Hypodermic = injection below the skin
Peri-	Around	Pericardium = membrane around the heart

A root helps to determine which part of the body it relates to

Root	What It Describes	Example
Carcino-	Cancer	Carcinogenic = cancer causing
Cyto-	Cell	Cytotoxic = toxic to the cell
Histo-	Tissue	Histology = study of tissue
Neuro-	Nerves	Neuroblast= an immature nerve cell
Onco-	Mass	Oncology = the study of cancer

A suffix helps to describes what the problem relates to

Suffix	What It Describes	Example
-Ectomy	Excision, removal	Nephrectomy = excision of a kidney
-Itis	Inflammation	Hepatitis = inflammation of the liver
-Oma	Tumor	Retinoblastoma = tumor of the eye
-Pathy	Disease	Neuropathy = disease of the nervous system
-Osis	Disease, condition	Necrosis = dying cells

Module 3 Lesson 2
Cancer Basics

Cancer
Uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells that divide and invade others within a person's body.

Tumors

Benign Tumor
Non-cancerous
Does not spread

Malignant Tumor
Cancerous
Invades tissue

Invasion
Direct penetration by cancer cells into neighboring tissue.

Metastasis
Ability of cancer cells to invade tissue elsewhere in the body.

Tumor Grade
Indicator of how quickly it will grow

Cancer Stage
The extent of cancer spread

Stage	What it Means
Stage 0	Carcinoma in situ
Stage I, II, III	Higher stage, more spread
Stave IV	Spread to distant parts

Key Takeaway
Cancer treatment includes surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, targeted therapy and palliative treatment.

Normal Cells versus Cancer Cells

Normal → Hyperplasia → Dysplasia → Cancer
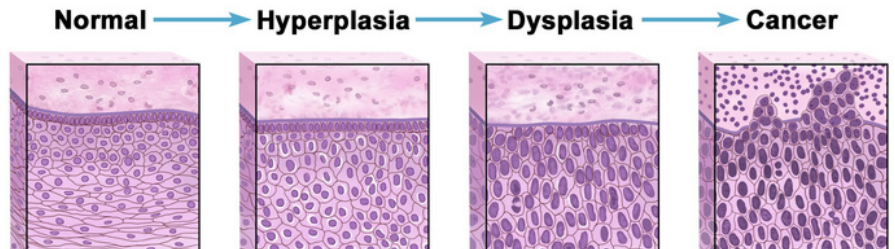
In hyperplasia there is an increase in cells and and they appear normal under a microscope.

In dysplasia the cells look abnormal under a microscope but are not considered cancer cells.

Cancer Prevention
Health behaviors can reduce cancer risk

Risk Factors
- Tobacco, alcohol
- Radiation
- Inherited genetics

Protective Factors
- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Screening tests

Cancer Detection
Early cancer may or may not show symptoms.

Cancer Diagnosis
The method of diagnosis will depend on the cancer type.

Cancer Screening Tests
Finds a disease early, making it easier to treat

Cancer Treatment

Neo-adjuvant treatment =
Given before

Adjuvant treatment =
Given after

As a patient navigator, you are not responsible for talking with patients about clinical care.

Module 3 Lesson 3
Clinical Trials

Clinical Trial
The goal is to find better and safer ways to ways to prevent, screen for, diagnose or treat disease.

PN Role in Clinical Trials
Provide information to understand clinical trials and guidance for talking with clinicians about clinical trials as a treatment option.

Clinical Trial Phases

Phase I Clinical Trial	15 to 30 people
Phase II Clinical Trial	100 people or less
Phase III Clinical Trial	100 to 1000
Phase IV Clinical Trial	100s to1000s

Which patients can join a clinical trial?
It depends. If a patient is eligible, it means that they meet the participation requirements, which are often strict.

Clinical Trial Benefits
New treatments may be more effective and safer

May be first to benefit from new treatment

High quality care close follow-up by doctors

Clinical Trial Participation

- Participation is voluntary
- Patients can leave at any time
- Not right for everyone
- Laws protect the rights of participants

Patient Protection

- Medical ethics includes respect for persons, beneficence, and justice

- Institutional Review Board determines if study is safe, ethical, and well-designed

- Laws require patients to give informed consent to participate

Clinical Trial Risks
New treatments not always better

Unexpected or worsened side effects

May have more doctor visits or tests

Key Takeaway
Patient navigators should not provide details about specific clinical trials and eligibility, decide if a patient joins, or encourage a patient to participate. Patient navigators should inform patients about clinical trials and advise them to speak with their doctor about eligibility.

Can patients get a placebo instead of real treatment?
No. If patients do not receive the experimental treatment they will still receive the best standard of care treatment.

Finding Clinical Trials
National Cancer Institute (800-4-CANCER)

American Cancer Society (800-303-5691)

Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment Impacts

Cancer can impact patients in many ways and each patient will experience treatments differently.

Cancer and Comorbidities

Many people also have other diseases or conditions they are dealing with at the same time as cancer:

- Arthritis
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Heart disease
- Obesity

Psychosocial

Physical

Impacts of Cancer

Practical

Spiritual

These impacts may be interrelated and persist after treatment

Adolescents and Young Adults

Individuals aged 15-40 who face unique challenges from older adults with treatment.

Advanced Cancer

Cancer that cannot be cured and some people live with for months or years.

Cancer Survivor

Person done with treatment

May not like the word "survivor"

At-risk for long-term or late effects

Survivorship Care Plan

Tools for cancer survivors after treatment:

- Treatment summary
- Follow-up plan

Long-Term Effect
During treatment
After treatment

Late Term Effects
After treatment
Months or years

Components of Survivorship Care

- Prevention and detection new cancer
- Surveillance for recurrence or new cancer
- Interventions for long-term or late effects
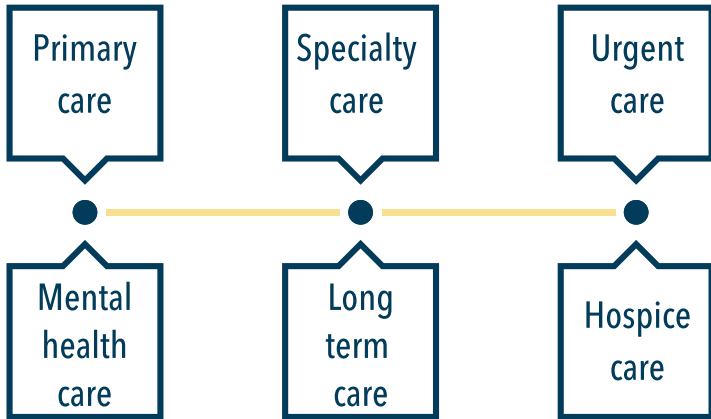- Coordination between health care providers

Key Takeaway
Throughout the continuum of care, PNs should work to understand cancer's unique impact on each patient .

Module 3 Lesson 5
U.S. Health Care System

Care Settings

Primary care	Specialty care	Urgent care

Mental health care	Long term care	Hospice care

Cancer Care Delivery

- Hospital-based program
- Academic cancer center
- Community cancer center
- Private practice

Hospitals may be public, non-profit, or private institutions.

Healthcare Specialists

Social work	Physical therapy	Surgery

Internal medicine	Oncology	Family medicine
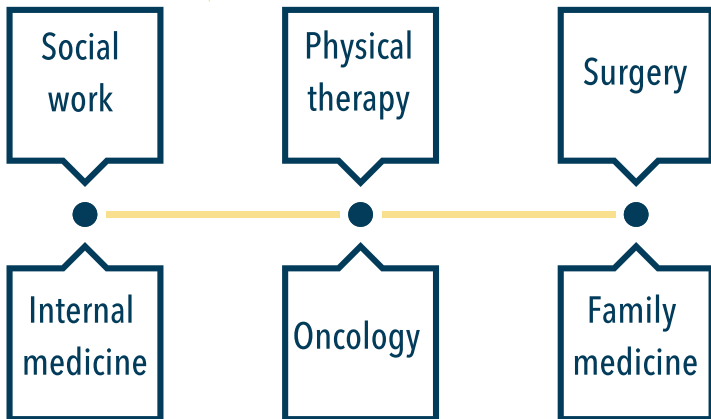
Oncology Specialists

- Radiology
- Pathology
- Hematology
- Radiation oncology

Although some specialists sound similar, each service is very different.

Inpatient Care vs Outpatient Care Delivery

A patient's status is based on whether they are inpatient or outpatient and affects how much an insurer covers and patient pays for hospital services.

An inpatient is a patient admitted to a hospital to receive required services.

An outpatient is patient that receives services performed outside of a hospital.

The Role of Patient Navigators

- Assist patients in accessing and navigating cancer care
- Assess barriers to care and identify resources
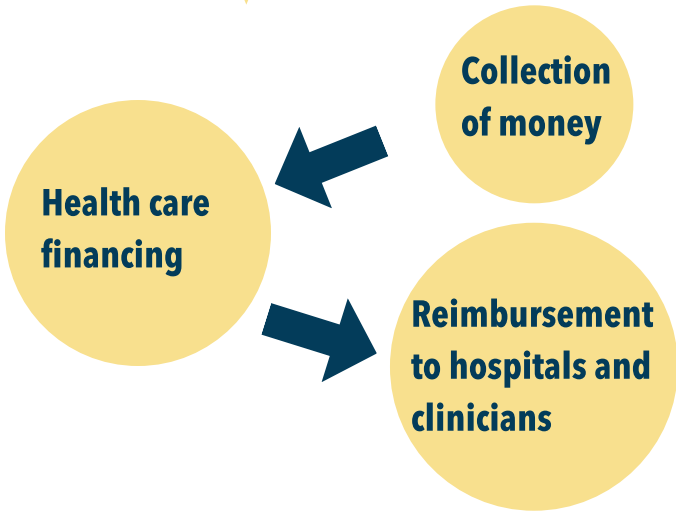- Engage patients in creating solutions

Key Takeaway

Cancer care is a team effort that includes many disciplines: doctors, nurses, pharmacists, therapists, and more.

Module 3 Lesson 6
An Overview of Patient Navigation and Competencies

Health Care Financing

Collection of money

Health care financing

Reimbursement to hospitals and clinicians

Insurance Terms

- **Copay** — Amount a person with health insurance pays at the time of each visit or when buying medicine.

- **Deductible** — Amount a patient owes before health insurance coverage begins to cost-share services.

- **Premium** — Amount that must be paid for by the patient for health insurance.

Private Health Insurance
Employer-sponsored insurance plans

- Main ways Americans receive insurance
- Financed by employers and employees

Health Plan Types

- Health Maintenance Organization
- Preferred Provider Organization
- Point of Service
- Fee for Service
- High Deductible Health Plan

Public Health Insurance

Medicaid
Covers pregnant women, children, elderly and disabled individuals under a certain income level.

Medicare
Covers individuals aged 65 and over.

S-CHIP
Covers children whose families don't qualify for Medicaid.

The VA
Offers affordable or free care to veterans.

Federal Poverty Guidelines
Determines financial eligibility for public programs using federal poverty levels (FPL) and is issued each year for all U.S. states plus D.C., Alaska, and Hawaii.

The 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)

A key component is the creation of health insurance marketplaces and every state must have marketplace plans.

Key Takeaway
The ACA identified ten essential health benefits, provided more options for obtaining insurance, banned plans from dropping a patient with a pre-existing condition, and created rules to make information easier to understand.

Module 4 Lesson 1
The Role of Patient Navigators

Patient Navigator Functions

There are some general functional categories that describe patient navigator functions:

- Professional roles and responsibilities
- Barriers to care and health disparities
- Patient empowerment
- Communication
- Community resources
- Education, prevention and health promotion
- Ethics and professional conduct
- Cultural competency
- Outreach
- Care coordination
- Psychosocial support services and assessment
- Advocacy

The Cancer Care Continuum

Primary prevention > Screening and early detection > Treatment > Survivorship

Patient navigators address barriers to care, no matter where they work in the cancer continuum.

Barriers to Care

There are five general types of barriers that patient navigators may need to assist with:

Practical	Personal	Psychosocial	Provider	Systems
• Costs	• Health myths	• Mental health	• Biases	• Appointments
• Transportation	• Mistrust	• Stigma	• Culture	• Wait time
• Language	• Knowledge	• Social support	• Communication	• Interpreters

Patient Navigator Duties

Categories of Navigator Tasks

- Navigating
- Facilitating
- Maintaining systems
- Documenting activities
- Other

Navigation Network Duties

- Patient interactions
- Provider interactions
- Non-clinical staff
- Supportive services
- Paper or electronic medical records

Key Takeaway
All patient navigators help patients address barriers to care.

Module 4 Lesson 2
Patient Assessment

The 5 A's
A model developed by the National Cancer Institute to help people quit smoking, which has been adapted for patient navigation.

Ask → Assess → Advise → Assist → Arrange

Building Rapport
- Clarify your role and how you help
- Show interest and listen actively
- Anticipate a patient's feelings
- Normalize the need to ask for help
- Use non-threatening language
- Use open-ended questions
- Be aware of non-verbal signals
- Be empathetic

Conversation Tips

Ask and Assess
Listen | Look | Clarify | Ask

Ask and assess a patient's knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and readiness.

Strengths-Based Approach
Previous experience | Coping skills | Spirituality | Personal strength

Identify a patient's strengths to help them be more effective in solving later problems.

Elicit-Provide-Elicit Strategy
Provide | Elicit | Elicit
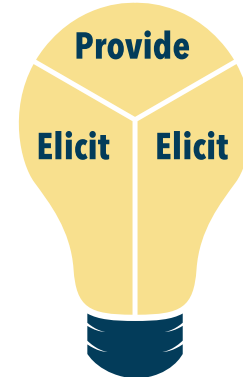
Ask and provide a patient information to neutrally explore ambivalence.

The Problem Solving Cycle
Use these steps to help patients solve issues

1. Define and clarify issue
2. Gather and verify facts
3. Identify key players
4. Brainstorm solutions
5. Identify pros and cons
6. Choose the best option
7. Develop action plan
8. Follow-up

Assessing Emotional Needs
One role of a patient navigator is to build a patient's awareness of coping strategies

Types of Coping Strategies

Active/Passive Problem-Focused

Active/Passive Emotion-Focused

Key Takeaway
It's hard to know when to refer patients to a mental health specialist, but it's better to over-refer than under-refer.

Shared Decision-Making

Patient navigators can encourage patients in shared decision-making using the following patient-centered strategies.

- Encouragement and partnership
- Set agenda together
- Active listening
- Ensure understanding
- Display empathy

Considerations for Assessing Capacity

- Language
- Physical condition and environment
- Health literacy
- Learning style

Treatment Plan and Adherence

A treatment plan describes the path of cancer care and who is responsible for each portion of that care.

- Not want to change behavior
- Fail to fill prescription
- Uninvolved in creating plan
- Feel too busy or stressed
- Disbelief about severity of condition

Barriers for patients having trouble following their plan

Self-Management

Patients comfortable with self-management coordinate various aspects of care

- Track symptoms
- Schedule appointments
- Take mediation
- Adopt healthy behaviors

Key Takeaway

Patients may face challenges adhering to their treatment plan. Patient Navigators should always make clinicians aware of adherence challenges.

Module 4 Lesson 4
Identifying Resources

Asset Mapping

Helps identify resources that can be helpful for patients

Person

Community organization

Physical structure

Service

Making Your Resource Diretory

- ☑ Identify personal, network or community assets
- ☑ Interview formal or informal organizations
- ☑ Look for local, state, or national level resources
- ☑ Include resources to meet basic needs
- ☑ Complete the resource directory form(s)

Evaluating Resources

There are several criteria you can use to assess:

Sponsors - - - **Currency** - - - **Information**

Audience - - - **Privacy** - - - **Financial disclosure**

Patient Resources

Resources patients often need fall into these areas:

- Treatment options
- Physical issues
- Practical issues
- Psychosocial issues
- Service referrals

Getting Ready to Contact the Organization

3. Be persistent

2. Know who you are calling

1. Know what you are asking for

Health on the Net (HON)

An international organization that promotes and guides users to websites that provide reliable and useful information.

Stewardship

Because resources are limited and patients need help, patient navigators need to be good stewards of resources and prioritize the neediest of patients.

Key Takeaway

Websites with a HON logo assure the patient navigator that the website is credible, current, contains pertinent information.

HON @ CODE

Module 5 Lesson 1
Communicating with Patients

Patient-Centered Communication Framework

The National Cancer Institute's Patient Centered Communication Framework consists of 6 core functions that overlap and interact, leading to communication that can improve outcomes:

- **Fostering healing relationships, which includes building trust and rapport with the patient**
- **Exchange information about cancer and its treatment**
- **Responding to emotions by recognizing a patient's state and asking questions to understand**
- **Managing uncertainty, which is particularly relevant for cancer patients with complex illness**
- **Making decisions**
- **Enabling self-management**

Strategies for Improving Communication

Summarize ⟩ Open-ended questions ⟩ Active and reflective listening ⟩ Affirm

Tips for Communicating with Patients

- Be assertive
- Use "I" messages
- Listen actively
- Match verbal and physical language
- Express your feelings

Strategies for Conflict Resolution

- **Work at talking about the issues**
- **Recognize the value of the conflict**
- **Recognize conflict is a spiral and can change direction**
- **Emphasize common goals**
- **Check perceptions**
- **Use competent communication techniques**
- **Agree to disagree**
- **Attack the problem, not the person**

Breaking Bad News

- **S** Setting up the interview
- **P** Perception
- **I** Invitation
- **K** Knowledge
- **E** Emotions and empathy
- **S** Strategy and summary

Key Takeaway
Patient navigators have difficult conversations with patients and should use strategies to be respectful and clear.

Self-Advocacy

An assertiveness and willingness to represent one's own interests when managing a life threatening disease.

Thoughts and cognitions	Personal characteristics
Actions	Learned skills
Use of resources	Attainability of support

Elements Needed to Advocate   **Influences on Self-Advocacy**

Patient Advocate

A person who helps a patient work with others who have an effect on the patient's health and helps resolve issues related to their medical condition.

Tips for Advocating for Patients

- Know their needs
- Determine when to advocate
- Balance assertion and aggression

Engagement Behavior Framework

- Find good health care
- Communicate with health care professionals
- Organize health care
- Pay for health care
- Make good treatment decisions
- Participate in treatment
- Promote health
- Get preventive health care
- Plan for end of life
- Seek health knowledge

Key Takeaway
Patient-provider communication should be patient-centered and allow patients to express their wants, needs and preferences.

Supporting Patient Empowerment

As a patient navigator, you can support patient empowerment by helping with:

Knowledge

Skills   **Attitudes**

Module 5 Lesson 3
Culturally Competent Communication

Cultural Competency

A culturally competent health care system acknowledges and incorporates the importance of culture, assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance toward the dynamics that result from cultural differences, expansion of cultural knowledge and adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs. Cultural competency is always something to be sought through humility; it is not something ever acquired.

The negative evaluation of one group and its members relative to another.

Explicit Bias
Implies awareness of negative evaluation

Implicit Bias
Actions are unintentional or unconscious

Cross-Cultural Communication Models

Two models may help you with cross-cultural communication: RESPECT and LEARN

R { Rapport
E { Empathy
S { Support
P { Partnership
E { Explanations
C { Cultural competence
T { Trust

L { Listen
E { Explain
A { Acknowledge
R { Recommend
N { Negotiate

Communicating with Empathy

E Eye contact
M Muscles of facial expression
P Posture
A Affect
T Tone of voice
H Hearing the whole patient
Y Your Response

CLAS Standards

The National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (The National CLAS Standards) aim to improve health care quality and advance health equity by establishing a framework for organizations to serve the nation's increasingly diverse communities.

Key Takeaway
Factors, such as personal, cultural, ethnic and spiritual beliefs significantly impact a person's life. As a culturally sensitive navigator, you must acknowledge and understand patients' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors to guide interactions.

Scope of Practice for Non-Clinically Licensed Patient Navigators

Although there is not yet a defined scope of practice for the profession, it is essential that patient navigators...

DO NOT provide health care services such as:
- **Hands on patient care**
- **Counseling**
- **Interpretation, unless certified**

DO NOT offer opinions or judgements on:
- **The quality of physicians or care**
- **Diagnosis or treatment options**
- **Any aspect of health care**

Professional Boundaries with Patients

Boundaries distinguish a professional relationship from a personal one. Establishing clear limitations helps to:
- Maintain focus on your goals and a patient's goals
- Ensure confidentiality
- Prevent inappropriate dual relationships

Dual Relationships

Formed in settings where you are seen as a professional

but want to participate as a peer.

Blurring Boundaries and Staying in Bounds

Behavior That Blurs
- Self-disclosure
- Gifts and favors
- Over involvement

Tips
- Stay outwardly focused
- Practice saying no
- Focus on needs

Key Takeaway

Conflicts of interest are instances when the needs or interests of a navigator impact the navigator's abilities to act professionally and focus on the needs of the patient. Patient navigators can use various strategies to avoid and manage conflicts of interest.

Module 6 Lesson 2
Ethics and Patient Rights

Ethics

Ethics is a process of navigating and negotiating values in order to act with integrity as an individual, organization, or society.

Ethical Health Care Systems Standards

- Respect the rights and dignity of patients
- Respect clinical judgement
- Provide optimal care to each patient
- Avoid imposing a non-clinical risk or burden
- Address health inequalities

Framework for Ethical Decision-Making

- Recognize an ethical issue
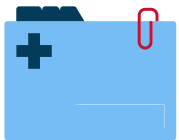- Get the facts
- Evaluate alternative actions
- Make a decision and test it
- Act and reflect on outcome

Patients Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

The Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities protects patients, ensures quality health care, and establishes trust between patients and health care providers.

Examples of Patient Rights

- See medical records
- Access emergency services
- Choose provider
- Be part of treatment decision

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

A law to protect patient privacy

- Sets limits on who has the right to use a patient's health information
- Describes how a patient's health information must be protected

Key Takeaway
Legal obligations vary by state and patient navigators need to be aware of legal obligations that may apply to them.

Module 7 Lesson 1
Practicing Efficiently and Effectively

Building Trust

You will need to be able to build trust with your patients and your colleagues; trust leads to better communication, which leads to better patient outcomes.

Components for Building Trust

- Respect rights
- Be responsive
- Maintain boundaries
- Actively listen

Skills for Being Responsive

Organization
- Avoid multi-tasking
- Plan your projects

Time management
- Structure your schedule
- Commit to downtime

Problem solving
- Use problem solving cycle

Critical thinking
- Apply standards
- Seek information

Workload management
- Track progress
- Use technology to work

Navigation Software Options

GW Cancer Center does not endorse or guarantee the performance of any software.

- Nursenav
- MagView
- PN-BOT
- OncoNav
- Cordata
- OmniCare
- Social Solutions
- Navigation Tracker
- CarePath Navigator

Key Takeaway

Information technology can help you manage responsibilities and work efficiently.

Types of Teams

Interprofessional Team

Members from various disciplines that work together .

Multidisciplinary Team

Members from various disciplines that work on their own first.

Characteristics of Effective Teams

TRUST

RESPECT

TEAMWORK

Impact of Dysfunctional Teams

Low job satisfaction

Waste of resources

Fragmented or duplicated care

Poor patient outcomes

Poor work environment
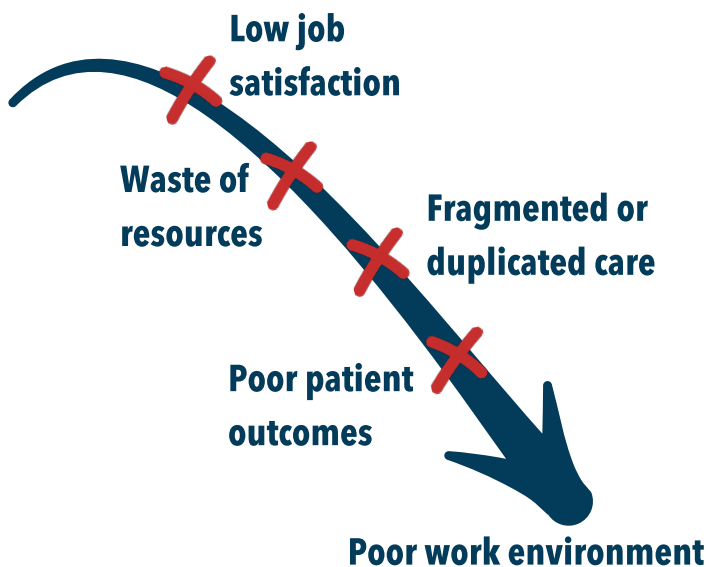
Supporting a Smooth Care Transition

- Confusion about who is leading care
- Team members are misinformed
- Patient feels support shrinking

- Identify who gets the handoff
- Everyone knows about transition
- Continue patient advocacy

Conflict Resolution: SBAR & Walk in the Woods

- **S** Situation
- **B** Background
- **A** Assessment
- **R** Recommendation

- **1** Self interests
- **2** Enlarged interests
- **3** Enlightened interests
- **4** Aligned interests

Key Takeaway
SBAR and Walk in the Woods are strategies to resolve conflicts on your health care team and to help your patients communicate with providers.

Module 7 Lesson 3
Program Evaluation and Quality Improvement

Program	Group of resources and activities used together to fulfill one or more purposes.
Program Evaluation	Systematic collection and analysis of information about aspects of program to guide decisions.
Stakeholders	Organizations, groups, or individuals with interest in the power to influence a program.

Types of Evaluation and Questions they Answer

What is the problem?

How great is the need?

What was done?

How satisfied are patients?

How were patients impacted?

Were program goals met?

Formative Evaluation

Process Evaluation

Outcome Evaluation

Patient Navigator's Role in Program Evaluation

Data collection

Data analysis (maybe)

Data reporting (maybe)

Quality Improvement: The PDCA Cycle

Plan

Do

Check

Act

Key Takeaway

It's important for patient navigators to be able to talk about what they do and why other people should find their work valuable. When you communicate the value of patient navigation, your message should be tailored to the stakeholder.

Module 7 Lesson 4
Personal and Professional Development

Tips for Giving Feedback

View feedback as part of your role

↓

Be clear about what's expected of you

↓

Be specific

↓

Provide feedback in a non-judgemental way

↓

Give feedback in a timely manner

↓

Focus on one to two concepts

Tips for Receiving Feedback

Listen with intent

↓

Ask for clarification if needed
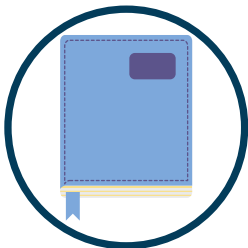
↓

Assume positive intent

↓

Allow yourself time to respond

↓

Be willing to share your perspective

↓

Ask for suggestions to modify behavior

Professional Development Plans

A professional development plan can serve as a guide for your career, providing a tool to measure your progress and steer your development activities

Write goals and tasks → **Identify resources** → **Keep track of progress**

Stress and Symptoms

Frequently sick or ill

Crying more

Change in sleep or eating

Unhealthy behaviors

Clumsiness or awkwardness

Key Takeaway
The nature of the work of patient navigation can at times be stressful. It's important for you to understand what stress is, the signs that stress is becoming negative and unhealthy and how you can care for yourself to balance your stress levels.