

ABSTRACT

The routine provision of survivorship care plans (SCPs) is a standardized approach which historically does not consider the unique needs of ovarian cancer survivors. A “one-size-fits-all” approach to survivorship care may be detrimental to ovary cancer survivors who live with uncertainty and risk of recurrence.

Ongoing survivorship care to women living with ovarian cancer (WLOC) requires that clinicians shift from a surveillance paradigm to a more comprehensive approach to survivorship care. We developed a survivorship navigation platform that is focused on patient engagement in goal-setting around pillars of survivorship care – including surveillance, healthy behaviors, self-management of symptom burden, and close follow up with primary care. This approach is efficacious in supporting quality of life in breast cancer survivors.

Working with ovary cancer patients and care partners we adapted this platform to better meet the needs of WLOC. Among the adaptations is exchanging the follow up with PCP goal for a “living well with a serious illness” goal. However, generalizable and acceptable approaches to training clinicians in survivorship care for WLOC or other advanced cancer is lacking. This formative study examines the acceptability of training for survivorship care providers incorporating the needs of WLOC including the palliative principle of living well with serious disease.

METHODS

We developed a web-based training program based on POSTCare platform training and adapted for issues specific to ovarian cancer. This comprises 13 modules that include discreet modules focused on ovary cancer basics, communication skills, goal setting, and palliative care skills. The training is hosted on a Canvas Instructure website. Each module is designed using adult learning principles to require 15 minutes or less to complete. They include the use of training videos and frequent knowledge checks. Active completion time ranged from 2-5 hours.

Nine oncology nurses including 2 RNs and 7 advance practice nurses (APNs) completed the online training, including a 1:1 training fidelity check. We conducted semi-structured exit interviews with gynecologic oncology nurses who completed the POSTCare-O web-based training and utilized the POSTCare model in clinical care. The interview guide gathered data on nurses’ experience with the training, their perceptions of a process-focused approach to survivorship care, and impact on their perceptions of the scope of survivorship care.

Interviews were transcribed and analyzed by research team members with qualitative expertise (FP, EK). Utilizing a pre-existing thematic framework, they systematically coded the responses. This framework allowed for the identification and categorization of key themes related to the training program's effectiveness, perceived benefits, challenges, and areas for improvement.



RESULTS

Nine oncology nursing providers (2 RNs, 7APNs) completed the online training and follow up assessment. All participants who initiated training completed all modules, and they all passed their final competency assessment consisting of a role play with a POSTCare-O survivorship coach.

Exit interview data revealed four areas in which participants reported gains or changes in their own perceptions and skills related to survivorship care that they attributed to the POSTCare-O training program. Nurses identified the training: **(3) demonstrated how to implement patient driven goal setting**

“When we talk about goals and what’s important...with medical oncology stuff we are telling people what to do and when to do it.. But it’s more shared goals and shared work...”
Participant 2

(1) enhanced their communication skills noting that motivational interviewing skills and goal setting skills were useful in their practice

“Like the open-ended questions and she gave me the suggestion of with, like, goals, and like asking you how confident Do you feel that you can accomplish that goal? Like, I definitely love that suggestion. I feel like I definitely use that”
Participant 1

(4) left them better able to support survivors in the face of uncertainty.

“We step outside a medical role and kind of enjoy having a different relationship with patients...” Participant 4

(2) developed their understanding of survivorship care as more than just surveillance

“How survivorship & palliative care can go hand in hand made a lot more sense to me after the training...” Participant 2

CONCLUSIONS

POSTCare-O web-based training was feasible and improved APPs understating of patient driven survivorship care planning and their ability to provide whole person care. Web-based training in delivery of components of early concurrent palliative care may be incorporated into a patient-driven nurse-delivered survivorship platform.

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