

Food Insecurity in Cancer Care: Strategies and Challenges in Addressing Patient Needs

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INTRODUCTION

Patients with cancer face numerous challenges during their treatment journey, including financial strain, psychological stress, and the physical side effects of anticancer therapies. Among these, food insecurity is a critical concern, with the potential to impact treatment adherence, clinical outcomes, and overall quality of life. Recognizing this, the Association of Cancer Care Centers (ACCC) sought to evaluate how cancer centers are addressing food insecurity and to identify gaps in service provision.

METHODS

ACCC aimed to identify obstacles hindering the successful implementation of food pantries within cancer centers and to assess the challenges associated with integrating food insecurity screening into routine care. Through a virtual webinar to raise awareness about food insecurity among patients with cancer, ACCC brought together experts from various disciplines to share insights on organizational readiness for developing food pantries and highlight best practices. The webinar included polling to gather information from attendees regarding their organizations' food insecurity screening practices and perceived barriers.

RESULTS

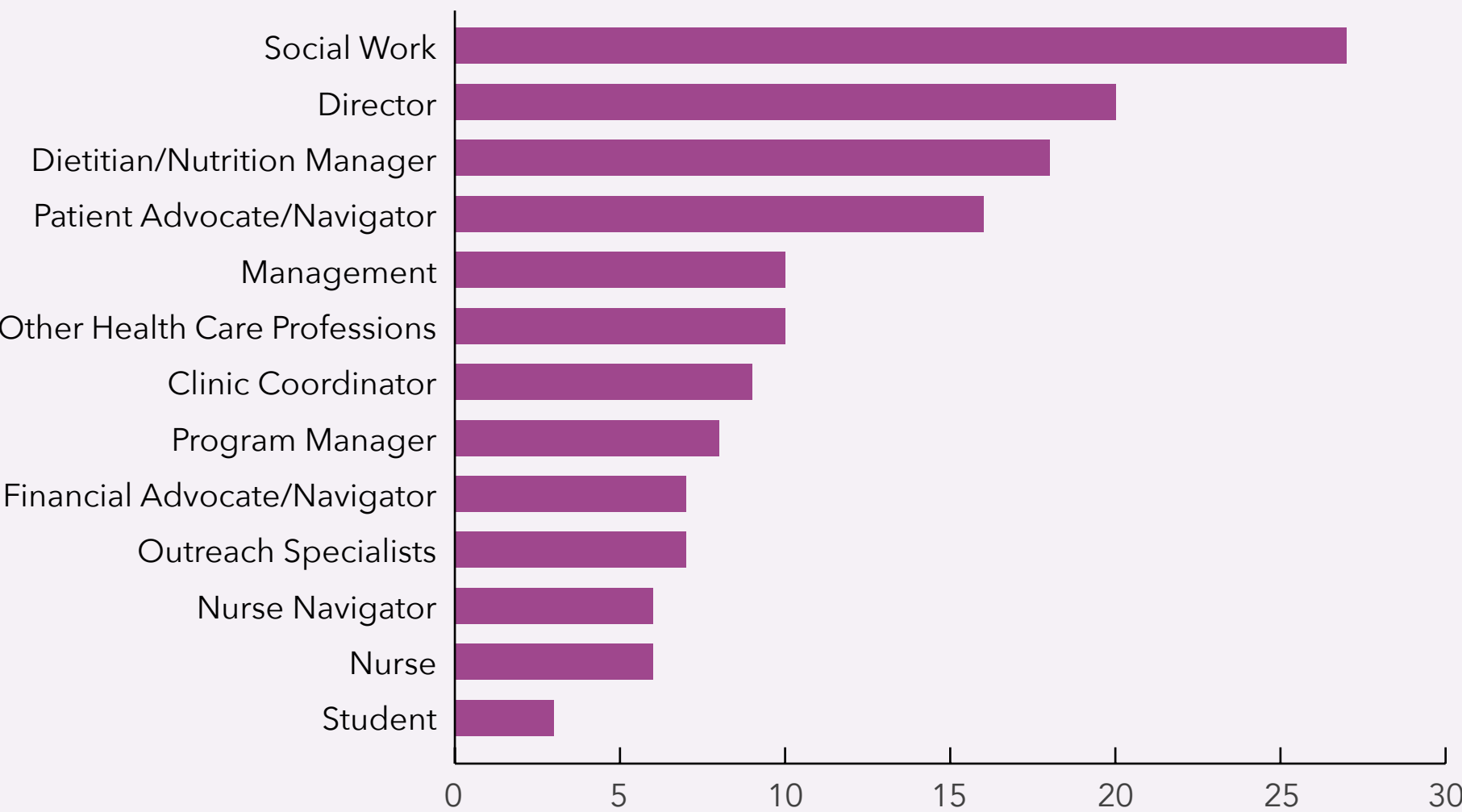
There were 147 multidisciplinary cancer team members in attendance for the webinar and 74 attendees responded to the post-webinar survey (50%). Among the respondents, 62 (83%) organizations reported screening patients for food insecurity, while 8 (10%) were unsure, and 4 (5%) did not screen.

Key barriers identified by attendees:

- Lack of integration with electronic health records (EHRs) for systematic screening
- Limited space for food pantry development.

These findings highlight significant gaps in infrastructure and resource allocation.

FOOD INSECURITY SCREENING



CONCLUSIONS

The poll results demonstrate that an increasing number of cancer centers are now incorporating food insecurity screening into their workflows, reflecting growing recognition of the impact on patient care. However, substantial barriers to equitable patient food security remain that will require cross-disciplinary collaboration, increased resource allocation, and policy support to address.

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CONTACT US

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For more information, please out to Rifeta Kajdic Hodzic at resources@accc-cancer.org.