Improving the shared care of breast cancer survivors:
An institutional multi-phase quality improvement study

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Figure 1: Breast Cancer 5-Year Survival (SEER)

Background

- Cancer Survivors in US: 17 million in 2019, predicted to be 22 million by 2030 (NIH)
- One in eight women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime (SEER)
- High practice variability in survivorship care
- Unclear guidelines for cancer survivor care transitions
- Need for improved Primary Care and Oncology coordination

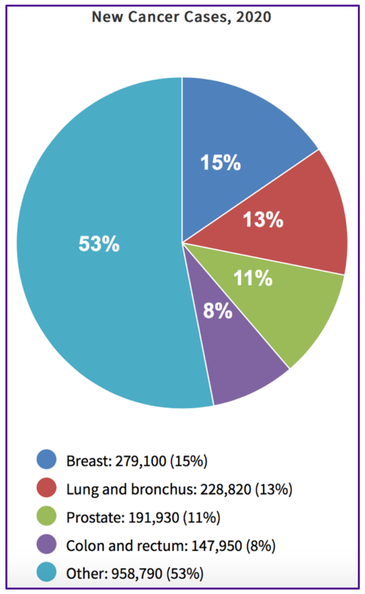

Figure 2: New Cancer Cases by Site, 2020 (SEER)

Setting

- UW has large and diverse Primary Care network and a comprehensive cancer center, Seattle Cancer Alliance
- Positioned well to model survivorship care
- Multi-phase QI project within Breast Division

Aims

1. Assess current survivorship care practices
2. Develop co-management guidelines for breast cancer survivor care transitions
3. Foster a collaborative partnership between Breast Oncology and Primary Care

Methods

Phase 1: Qualitative Interviews *(almost complete)*

- Primary Care and Oncology providers
- Explored patient handoffs, shared care challenges, survivorship education, and use of patient records

Phase 2: Transition Tool Development *(upcoming)*

- Responding to Phase 1 themes
- Referral guides, Survivorship Care Plans, patient handoffs workflows, survivorship training

Phase 3: Post Implementation Assessment *(upcoming)*

- Surveys to providers about use of Phase 2 Tools

Top: UW Roosevelt Primary Care
Bottom: Seattle Cancer Care Alliance

Results

- 15 providers interviewed (3 Oncology, 12 Primary Care) - diverse patient populations
- Common themes:
  - Unclear roles in care
  - Desire for formal handoffs
  - Lack of clarity in surveillance, side effect management, and follow up plans
- Survivorship training limited: 7 cite no training, 4 minimal informal training, 2 CMEs
- Of 13 PCPs interviewed, only 3 have ever received a Survivorship Care Plan

Conclusion

- Initial step in multi-phase ongoing QI project
- Demonstrated institutional need for improved communication and role clarity
- Future Goals:
  - Improve provider satisfaction and quality of care for breast cancer survivors
  - Create mutually approved guidelines for patient transitions and co-management
  - Establish breast oncology-primary care network of providers

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