



Establishing the Need for Provider Education on Cancer and Nutrition (PECAN) Survey Results on Nutrition Practices at a Large Community Oncology Practice

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BACKGROUND

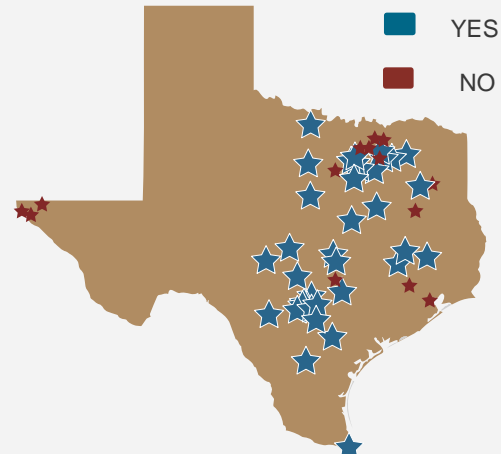
- Oncology providers and patients benefit from evidence-based nutritional resources to support cancer care.
- For patients, proper nutrition care can prevent inappropriate weight loss, improve treatment tolerance, and improve quality of life.
- Recent literature has noted the lack of both adequate dietitian resources at outpatient centers and lack of comprehensive nutrition guidelines in cancer care^{1,2,3}.
- At a large community practice with 210 locations across Texas and Southern Oklahoma a survey was developed and administered to assess nutrition practices.

METHODS

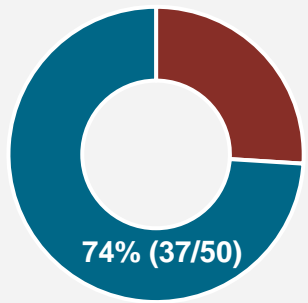
- Clinic directors throughout the practice participated in a survey to assess:
 - ✓ The presence or absence of a malnutrition screen and the tool used
 - ✓ How nutrition concerns are addressed in clinic
 - ✓ The availability of a dietitian

RESULTS

- 26 responses detailed the nutrition practices in 50 distinct locations.

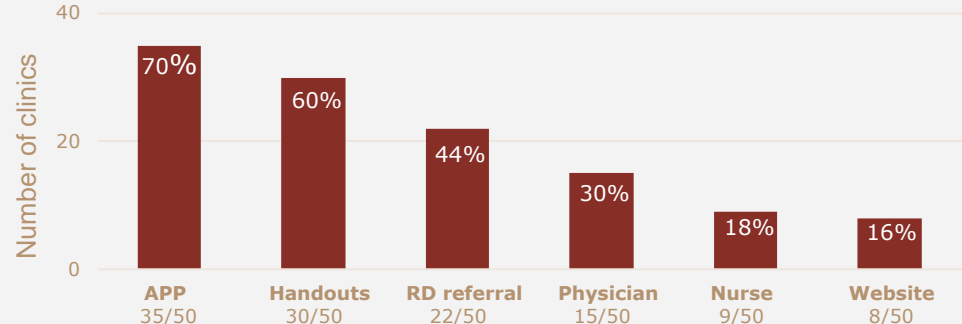


Clinics performing malnutrition screen



- 30 (81%) locations reported using the Malnutrition Screening Tool (MST)⁴, a brief validated tool for outpatient setting including oncology

A variety of provider types and methods were employed to address nutrition issues in clinic:



Methods of addressing nutrition issues

- 41 (82%) clinics employed >1 method for addressing nutrition issues.

RESULTS

- Malnutrition screen was completed by the advanced practice provider (APP)/ physician in 18 (49%) clinics, a nurse in 4 (11%) of clinics, a dietitian in 4 (11%) clinics and a medical assistant in 1 (3%) clinic.
- At 10 sites >1 provider type was responsible for completing the screen.
- 10 sites (20 %) had a dietitian available in clinic. Twenty-two sites (44%) referred to a dietitian.
- 16 of 26 respondents (62%) reported that increased dietitian access would be helpful; this included respondents whose locations already had a dietitian available.

CONCLUSIONS

- Multiple providers are involved in the nutritional care of oncology patients.
- There is a need for increased malnutrition screening and increased access to dietitian services.
- In response to these findings, the multidisciplinary PECAN Taskforce was created to develop comprehensive malnutrition screening, implement a referral process for all at-risk patients, enhance nutrition education and expand dietitian services
- Further study will measure the impact of expanded nutrition access on patient outcomes

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