Evaluating Nutrition Services in Outpatient Cancer Care in New Mexico

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- Malnutrition in patients with cancer has a direct negative impact on morbidity and mortality.1–4.
- Evidence shows that early nutrition screening and provision of medical nutrition therapy administered by a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) yields positive results for cancer patients.5,6,7
- Despite these established benefits, RDN nutrition care can be inconsistent in outpatient oncology care.
- We will investigate presence/absence of malnutrition screening processes, access to nutrition services, and nutrition resources surrounding treatment centers across the state.
- This poster focuses on the protocol of the study.

Methodology

**Research Design for AIM 1:**
A nutrition focused community audit will be conducted through mixed methodologies:
- Quantitative data including presence or absence of policies and resources will be collected
- Qualitative data including interviews with providers/clinic administrators

**Research Design for AIMS 2 AND 3:**
- Clinic Operation Administrators from all centers will undergo interviews (n=1-2/center; up to n=20 interviews for Aim 2)
- 3-4 provider interviews will be conducted at each center
- Targeted total interviews for Aim 3: 25-35— All done by phone or in person
- Interviews will stop when information collected from interviews is being repeated

Examples of Interview Questions
- Interview guides will be used to facilitate interviews

Potential Implications and Future Research
- Positive outcomes can be produced through the usage of nutrition resources within outpatient cancer settings
- Complementary project that focuses on patient experiences with nutrition care provided in the outpatient setting will be conducted this upcoming Fall
- Through patient experiences and knowledge of present nutrition resources available or missing at cancer centers, an intervention can potentially be created to improve patient outcomes

Abbreviations

NMCC New Mexico Cancer Council
NMCCA New Mexico Cancer Care Alliance

References