Patient Navigation: An Emerging Role for Community Health Workers

Heather Nelson, PhD, MPH
Director of Community Services

Women’s Health Network & Men’s Health Partnership
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

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Community Health Workers (CHWs)

MA Dept. of Public Health CHW Functions:

- Bridging/culturally mediating between individuals, communities, and health and human services, including actively building capacity

- Providing culturally appropriate health education and information
Community Health Workers (CHWs)

MA DPH CHW Functions cont’d:

- Assuring that people get the services they need
- Providing direct services, including informal counseling and social support
- Advocating for individual and community needs
Community Health Workers: Essential to Improving Health In Massachusetts

2005

- Reported 50 job titles under the CHW definition
- Patient Navigator
CHWs in Massachusetts – Timeline

2006
Section 110, Chapter 58, Acts of 2006 (healthcare reform)
  ➢ DPH study – use, funding & impacts of CHWs

2007
CHW Advisory Council & CHW “town meetings”
CHWs in Massachusetts: Timeline

2009

Community Health Workers in Massachusetts: Improving Health Care and Public Health

34 recommendations:
- Professional identity
- Workforce development
- Financing
- Infrastructure

Women’s Health Network & Men’s Health Partnership

Program Model until June 2008

- Paid for specific services only – “body parts”
  - breast, cervical, prostate cancer screening
  - cardiovascular risk factor screening

- Provided case management & patient navigation

- Uninsured and underinsured clients statewide

- Separate programs; separate contractors/locations

- Served average of 2,000 men & 12,000 women per year
### Case Management & Patient Navigation Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Managers</th>
<th>Patient Navigators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Unclear about PN role</td>
<td>- Unclear about PN role &amp; role boundaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Unclear about PN skills</td>
<td>- Skills were not always used to their full potential</td>
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<td>- Uncertain how to incorporate PN into team</td>
<td>- Didn’t feel part of the team</td>
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Health Care Reform & Program Changes

- Mandated insurance for all – “no uninsured”
- Screening services previously paid for by DPH were now reimbursed by MA Commonwealth Care

The challenge: How would DPH invest its resources given MA Health Care Reform?
The Care Coordination Program

- **Goals:**
  - Support Health Care Reform
  - Focus on prevention
  - Reduce disparities
  - Apply national/state evidence-based care guidelines

- **Provide funding for:**
  - Patient Navigation staff
  - Case Management staff
  - Risk factor reduction education
  - Payer of last resort for screenings
Care Coordination Program Sites

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Women’s Health Network
Care Coordination Program 2008 - 2009

Legend

Service Area
Towns
- Contracted Service Area
- Pending Service Area
- Current Not Served

Screening Service Locations
- Primary Contract Locations
- Sub-Contract Locations
Partnership For Training: Area Health Education Centers

- **Patient Navigation Course**
  - Central MA AHEC
  - 45 hours, contractually mandated
  - 3-hour modules over 15 sessions
  - College credit available

- **PN Supervisor Training**
  - AHEC of Southeastern MA
  - 12 hours over 2-day long trainings, mandated
  - CEUs available
PN Course Methodology

- Team Instructing (PN co-instructors)
- Case Studies
- Role Play
- Small Group Work
- Structured Networking
PN Course Methodology

“I am a walking resource for the community. I have walked with women through the journey of experiencing breast cancer. I must give back and share my story with other women, to encourage them through this horrible disease.”
PN Course Curriculum

I. Occupational Core Competencies

- Communication Skills
- Organizational Skills
- Assessment Skills
- Documentation Skills
- Cultural Competency and Responsiveness Skills
- Service Coordination Skills
PN Course Curriculum

II. Health and Disease Specific Competencies

- Cardiovascular Health and Cardiovascular Disease
- Breast Health and Breast Cancer
- Cervical Health and Cervical Cancer
- Prostate Health and Prostate Cancer
- Colorectal Health and Colorectal Cancer
Assessment and Evaluation

- Pre-and post-course assessments measuring self-efficacy in core skills and health and disease specific content knowledge
- Class evaluations by participants, faculty, training administration
- Final take home competency exam
PN Course Outcomes

- Statistically significant improved perceived competence in core skills
- Statistically significant improved self-report of knowledge in health and disease content
- Increased awareness of patient resources
PN Supervisor Training

- Role of the Patient Navigator
- Health Disparities
- Oppression
- Cultural Competency and Responsiveness Skills
- Strength-Based Supervision of Patient Navigators
- Team Building – Integrating the Patient Navigator into the Health Care Team
Assessment & Outcomes

- Pre-and post-course assessments measuring self-efficacy in 6 key areas based upon course objectives.
- Statistically significant improved confidence in each of the objective areas.

“I have already seen positive changes in working with the Patient Navigator on our team.”
PN & Supervisor Trainings

Since 2007:

- Each course has been held 5 times
- 87 patient navigators
- 35 supervisors
Annual Patient Navigation Conference

- Funded by: Women’s Health Network & Office on Women’s Health
- Partners: AHEC SE, CMAHEC, MACHW
- Advisory board

www.patientnavigatormass.org
Annual Patient Navigation Conference

- DPH Commissioner, keynote, film
- Breakout sessions am & pm (CHWs/Supervisors)
- Poster session
- ~ 200 attendees
Patient Navigator Training Future

- Summer 2011 – hybrid course pilot
- 1 day in-person for PNs & Supervisors:
  - Interdisciplinary Teams & Communications
  - Cultural Competency
  - Introduction to Case Studies
  - Introduction to Online Course
  - PN & Supervisor Breakouts
- PNs 11 wks online & Supervisors 2 wks online
- 1 day in-person for PNs
Resources

- Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers (MACHW):
  http://www.machw.org/

- CHW Section of APHA:
  http://www.apha.org/membergroups/sections/aphasections/chw/
Thank you!

Questions?