



Health Leadership  
& Learning Network

**Health Leadership & Learning Network**  
**Faculty of Health**

## **WEBINAR NOTES**

*The Future of Patient Navigation as the Pandemic Drives Change*

Webinar date: April 28, 2020

*Please find a summary of comments from both Rosemary Kohr and the participants on the webinar. We would like to thank everyone on the webinar for their thoughtful input and hope that we have captured it accurately.*

**THIS FIRST SECTION INCLUDES  
ROSEMARY KOHR'S SLIDES**

## Identified issues for Patient Navigation as the future unfolds:

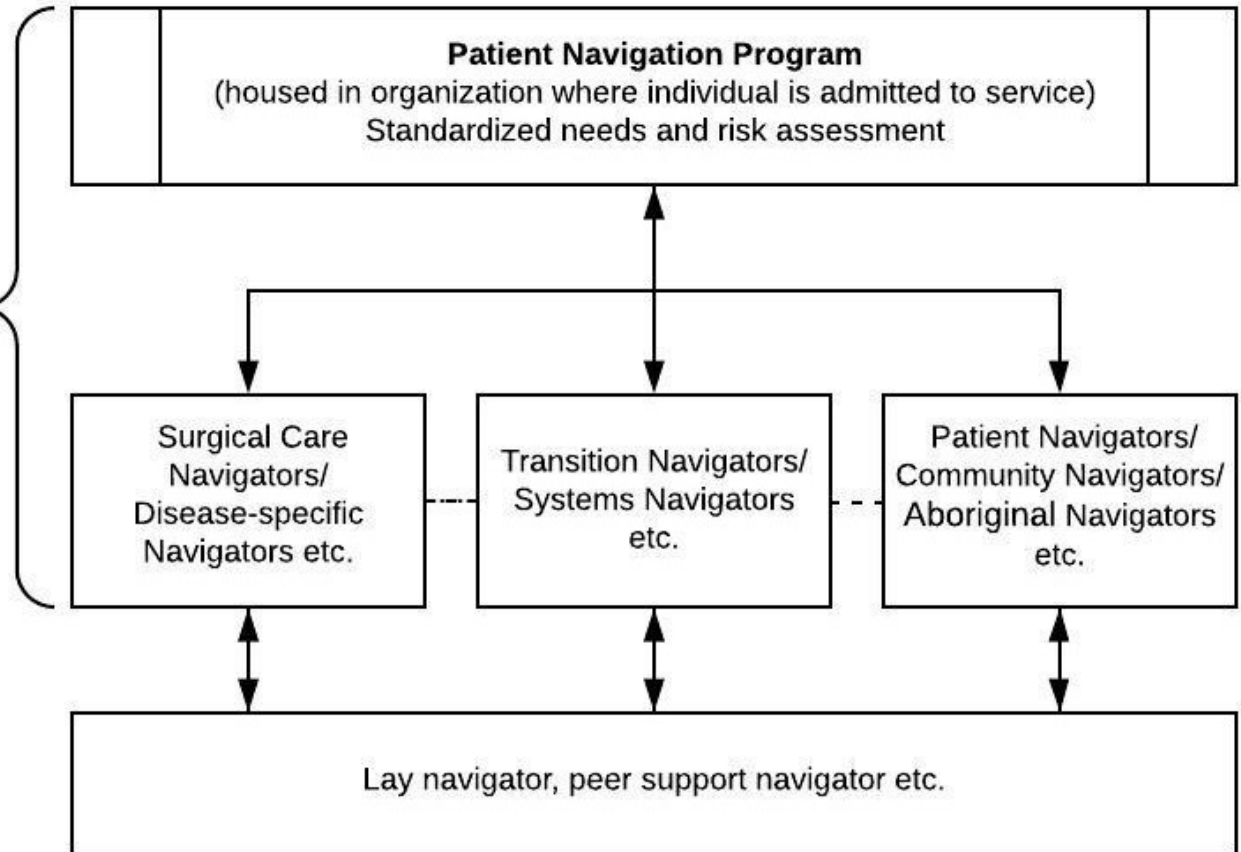
- Communication
  - Accurate
  - Health Literacy
- Technology
  - Access
- Increasing scope of navigation role:
  - Proactive connecting
  - Identifying resources
  - Can't assume all systems are working now

## The new Normal...

- Navigating new routines:
  - Dementia
  - Autism
  - *What other conditions require a new normal & extra navigation skills?*
- Lack of control/news:
  - Seniors
  - Pregnant women
  - Students
- Caregivers are overwhelmed/need a break
- Mental health of healthcare/essential workers and their families

## Patient Navigation system functions:

Under a Patient Navigator Program, broad or more specific titles could be used. With more attention to function, these specific roles could emerge as part of the collaborative team of patient navigators. For example, a patient navigator embedded in the surgical program could access individuals with a different (and potentially broader) mandate than the surgical program navigator—such as a community navigator.



## Positive response to change resulting from the pandemic:

*What are your thoughts? How does Patient Navigation have that positive potential for “good” change?*



**THE NEXT SECTION,  
INCLUDES THE COMMENTS AND RESOURCES  
PARTICIPANTS SHARED ON THE WEBINAR**

## ATTENDEES:

Some of the attendees of this webinar identified themselves as:

- Full-time navigators (some in primary care or transition navigator)
- Doing this as part of a larger role
- Part of new role - somewhat retired.
- Broad basis of nursing for 40 years
- Outpatient mental health
- Case Management which has become more of a navigation role
- Cancer Coach Nurse which involves navigating.
- Some said they were not navigators by certificate but by experience, navigating my patients for better outcomes or understanding of what they were dealing with.



## PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS:

### Challenges:

- There are many limitations with technology.
- There are many gaps in mental health
- Front line workers after this pandemic are going to need mental health assistance
- For newly diagnosed cancer patients, delays in treatments can impact their overall health status for staging of disease processes.
- Due to fake facts from media, there will be a huge curve for building trust again. We need to be able to provide direction on where to access correct information.
- Sometimes volunteer roles go beyond the boundaries and the information they give to others is inaccurate; then you have to go back and correct it

## PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS:

### Challenges:

- Caregivers at long-term care facilities have little to no assistance
- Some of us do wellness checks with our clients. We ask them a series of questions and if needed we send requests to healthcare providers.
- Patients and families think PSWs coming to their homes are nurses too.
- The Patient Navigator role is becoming too large, it is not as specific as other roles (e.g. PSW or nurse).
- There is a lot of confusion in the community in regards to the Patient Navigator or Lay Navigator role versus other healthcare providers in the community.

## PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS:

### Opportunities:

- We have to be more innovative at the community level. E.g. I have just opened a private practice here in Nova Scotia as an Oncology Nurse with additional training in psychosocial oncology. I call this role a Cancer Coach nurse, however it is hard to be visible because people feel safe with the provincial system and here in Nova Scotia there are no other oncology nurses in private practice.
- I work in hip and knee bundled care implementation at provincial level- navigators are hugely important in this program - planning for virtual for patients as elective surgeries open again
- I am a Professional Consultant on Aging and certainly play a "lay navigator role"... this is pretty new ...
- There is a need for community and for work on the ground to help the health and wellness of the public we service.

## **PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS:**

### **What is needed?**

- Resources in times of crisis
- Good communication skills and health literacy
- Liaise with other mental health agencies outreach workers and peer support workers
- Experience is essential when navigating others.

## **PARTICIPANTS' QUESTIONS:**

- Is there a directory of Patient navigators so that we can call on each other for guidance to regional services...
- Patients pending surgeries, all put on hold. How do they cope, when will things open again so they can have their required surgeries.
- How the Patient Navigator role will change with the restructuring of the healthcare system in Ontario (OHTs)

**RESOURCES SHARED BY THE PARTICIPANTS:**

- New facebook page created by one of the attendees, Patient Navigators in Canada  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/patientnavigators/?epa=SEARCH\\_BOX](https://www.facebook.com/groups/patientnavigators/?epa=SEARCH_BOX)

Thank you to all that participated in this webinar and added commentary and insight!

**We welcome you to continue to share resources with each other, and we can tweet them out and list them on our facebook page**

## CONTACT INFORMATION



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