

Supporting Stability for Oncology Patients in a Time of Health System Instability: Creation of an Online Hub for Information, Mental Health and Wellness and Practical Supports

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Background

COVID-19 has created healthcare systems disruptions and isolation for people living with cancer, resulting in the need for (1) easily accessible information about government and patient group programs (2) mental wellness supports and (3) practical supports (e.g. taxi program, grocery delivery, digital connectivity). Notwithstanding serious resource constraints, patient groups teamed up to fill these gaps by creating an online hub – launched May 6, 2020.

Methods

Patient surveys were conducted that identified these needs. We validated the results with oncology groups and the All.Can Canada Steering Committee including doctors, researchers, industry members and health systems experts. A leadership team, including a project coordinator, and working groups were established. The former raised funds, sourced services and coordinated the project. The latter, each led by a Chair, and supported by volunteers, guided content for the three areas. Media and webinars supplemented direct email and social media campaigns to promote the hub.

Results

Our task force is made up of 14 national oncology groups. Over 300 patient groups were notified about the hub at launch. We've added more than 100 new links and resources since launch and have booked and paid for more than 250 taxi requests for cancer patients in Toronto and Montreal. 140 patients registered for our Mindfulness at Home 8-week series in June/July. There are 1000 newsletter subscriptions and a cumulative total of 17,000 page views and 10,000 sessions by 7000 users. Prior to our French hub launching in early August, 15% of our traffic originated in Quebec and post launch, this increased to 40%.

