

ALLIANCE TO ADVANCE PATIENT-CENTERED CANCER CARE

The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center

Providing smartphones to increase patient utilization of services

Health System & Policy Changes



Patient-Provider
Communication



While smartphones have become an important tool to help connect patients with their clinical care team, owning and maintaining smartphone service can be prohibitively costly for many disadvantaged individuals with cancer. The Ohio State University (OSU) has partnered with Verizon to provide free smartphones, including free monthly service for one year, to underserved patients. For the last four years, these devices have been used at OSU to better monitor and track patients' symptoms; enhance communication between providers, patients and patient lay navigators; provide easy access to health records and patient

portals; and increase awareness of available community resources. Patients and physicians have found the program to be useful and report that patients are often more forthcoming during these smartphone check-ins about their symptoms than during their regular office visits. The partnership will be sustained through a contract with Verizon and expanded to additional patients beyond the clinics where it was originally implemented.



Being provided cell phones, I think, was really crucial because some of them actually did not have smartphones and they would not have been able to [participate] otherwise



Effective Strategies



- ✓ Forged a partnership with Verizon to provide smartphones free of charge to low-income cancer patients during treatment
- ✓ Using AAPCCC funding, established feasibility of the project
- ✓ Gained support of medical center faculty/staff and cancer center leadership
- ✓ Increased awareness of the smartphone provision project throughout the cancer center

Health System and Policy Changes

- ✓ Contract in place between OSU and Verizon for phone provision
- ✓ Use of a Government Service Contract through the university to receive reduced rates for monthly services fees
- ✓ Implementation of a smartphone symptom monitoring program during cancer treatment



... What it did was it allowed the patients to connect with the team and discuss symptoms that they may be experiencing that either weren't addressed in clinic or had developed in the interim between visits that were really key. I think this is really important because during a clinic visit, you're so focused on the cancer, the disease, the treatment ... you have limited time

