



Financial Impact of Cancer Survivorship

Background

As oncology treatments and outcomes continue to improve, the voices of over 10 million US cancer survivors¹ grow ever louder. Various patient advisory and advocacy groups, including the Institute of Medicine, have developed recommendations for the services and support that survivors require. These recommendations include providing each patient with a forward-looking care plan to deal with the changes to their lifestyle that result from the treatments they received. Even governments are getting involved. In 2007, Bill H.R. 1078, the Comprehensive Cancer Care Improvement Act, was referred to the House Subcommittee on Health, with a goal of amending Medicare to improve cancer survivorship care.

Key Issues

From a financial perspective, a key question is whether a survivorship program can drive increased revenues for the healthcare provider. Are cancer survivor-related revenues being lost to competing institutions? Can a survivorship program provide a competitive advantage to attract new patients? Another concern is how to serve a growing and vocal population of survivors with limited clinical resources. For many cancer centers, their staff of oncologists is already fully utilized, and the numbers of oncologists are not increasing. Can technology provide a solution?

The EQUICARE CS Solution

EQUICARE CS is a case management solution that enables cancer centers to deliver services to a growing survivor base by optimally deploying the clinical resources you already have. EQUICARE CS improves the financial implications of a cancer survivorship program in several important ways.

First, a survivorship program operated with EQUICARE CS can drive top-line revenue growth. Many routine follow-up procedures may not be performed by the cancer center or its affiliates. For example, a breast cancer survivor may have a follow-up chest X-ray performed at a third-party outpatient imaging center. A managed survivorship program can ensure that follow-up procedures are performed by your institution.

Furthermore, cancer centers with a survivorship program can create a competitive advantage through providing exemplary care to its survivors. As survivors share their experiences with their families, friends, and associates, your institution will attract new patients who may otherwise have gone to competing care centers.

Second, with limited oncologist capacity, EQUICARE CS allows cancer centers to offload much of the survivorship workload to lower cost staff such as nurse practitioners and nurse navigators, freeing high cost oncologists to focus on active treatments. EQUICARE CS accomplishes this by modeling the expertise and best practices of your oncologists, and sharing it with your survivorship program operators.

Third, EQUICARE CS adds automation to the survivorship program through HL7 interfaces, follow-up worklists, and a knowledge base that models the survivorship care protocols as defined by your own oncologists. This eliminates paperwork and overhead, and creates operational time and cost savings above and beyond the shift to lower cost personnel

¹ National Cancer Institute, 2004 figures

The EQUICARE CS Solution (Cont'd)

Finally, in some jurisdictions, a survivorship program may be a billable activity. In Virginia, some nurse practitioner-led survivorship activities, such as follow-up assessments, can be billed using standard CPT codes (992xx series). This is currently available to Medicare patients.

The chart summarizes a hypothetical business case for implementing a survivorship care program with EQUICARE CS. Consider a cancer center that generates 1,500 cancer survivors per year. With a survivorship program, one in three survivors returns to the center for a follow-up chest X-ray to search for metastases, which costs approximately

New Survivors per Year	1,500
Revenues and Reimbursements	
Incremental procedures per survivor	0.33
Chest X-Ray, 2 View	250
Total incremental revenue from survivors	125,000
Incremental procedures per survivor reference	0.25
Chest X-Ray, 2 View	250
Total incremental revenue from survivor references	93,750
Nurse-led follow-up assessments per year	3
Reimbursement per assessment (80% of physician-led)	48
Total reimbursements	216,000
Total incremental revenues	\$434,750
Survivorship Program Operating Costs	
Nurse Practitioners required	1.5
Nurse Practitioner annual labor cost	110,000
Total labor cost	165,000
EQUICARE CS cost per patient	100
Total EQUICARE CS cost	150,000
Total costs	\$315,000
Net Profit	\$119,750
ROI	38%

\$250 each. Furthermore, one in four survivors recommends a friend to have their next procedure performed by your institution. After subtracting operating costs, the survivorship program generates a return of nearly 40%.

Another benefit that may improve financial outcomes includes the ability to standardize follow-up care across a multi-facility enterprise with EQUICARE CS, resulting in further improvements to operating costs. Also, a standardized and structured follow-up program will allow your institution to monitor and continuously improve the delivery of both acute and follow-up care, which can help address future pay-for-performance concerns.

EQUICARE CS is a software solution that provides a win-win situation for both cancer survivors and their care providers. Please visit us at www.cogenths.com or e-mail us at info@cogenths.com to learn more.



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