



Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Institute Backgrounder

Overview

The Ralph Lauren Center for Cancer Care and Prevention established the Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Institute in June 2007. Made possible by a generous \$2.5 million leadership grant from the Amgen Foundation, the Institute was established to provide training to individuals associated with organizations which may develop or expand patient navigation programs throughout the country and across the world. The Institute is also creating a national database for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information regarding best navigation practices.

The Institute is named in honor of its president and founder, Harold P. Freeman, M.D., the pioneer of the patient navigation concept. Dr. Freeman is also president and founder of the Ralph Lauren Center in Harlem, where patient navigation has been a cornerstone of the Center's success in providing integrated cancer services in its community. He is an internationally recognized authority on interrelationships between race, poverty and cancer. In 1990, Dr. Freeman initiated and developed the nation's first patient navigation program in Harlem to reduce disparities in access to diagnosis and treatment of cancer particularly among poor and uninsured people.

The purpose of patient navigation is to eliminate barriers to timely diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Patient navigator programs are currently under review for application in other chronic diseases.

Institute's Goals

- To set and ensure standards for patient navigation programs through an emphasis on the Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Model.
- To help others learn best patient navigation practices by creating a national database for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information regarding best navigation practices.

Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Model: The "Gold Standard"

The Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Institute's Training and Certification Program is not only led by the foremost expert in the field, but is also the only certification program in patient navigation that exists.

Since Dr. Freeman initiated the concept of patient navigation in 1990, many organizations have implemented similar programs. Much of the recent growth has been spurred by funding from government agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services to establish patient navigator programs which target vulnerable populations throughout the country. The nonprofit and private sectors have also funded many patient navigation programs. Such programs vary in



their approach to providing patient navigation. To date there are no widely applied standards for defining or measuring the effect of various forms of patient navigation.

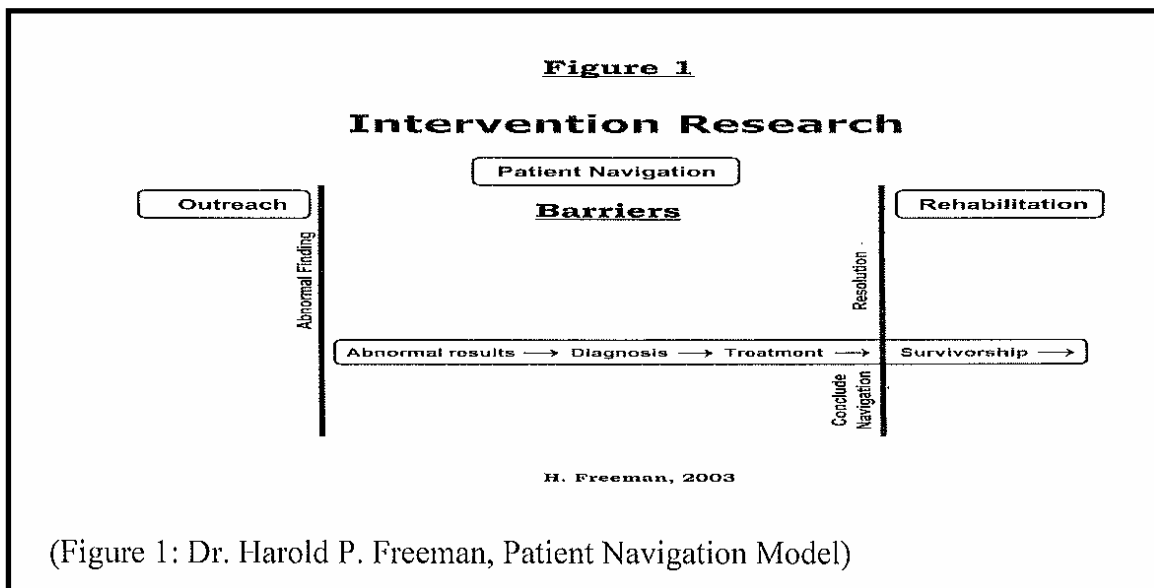
The Institute opened its doors to address the growth in patient navigation programs, but also to offer standards and best practices that can be tailored to each program's needs.

The core principles which we must apply to save lives from cancer include the following: 1) Educate people to promote behavioral and lifestyle changes that will result in primary prevention of cancer.

2) Inform people about the need for certain cancer screening examinations and provide access to such examinations.

3) Ensure that any patient with an abnormal finding on examination will receive timely diagnosis and treatment.

There is a particularly critical window of opportunity to save lives from cancer -- between the point of a suspicious finding and the resolution of the finding by further diagnosis and treatment (Figure 1).



- Financial barriers
- Uninsured and under-insured
- Communication and information barriers
- Medical system barriers
- Missed appointments and lost results
- Fear and emotional barriers



Patient navigation has a special role in assuring that people receive appropriate screening examinations and in ensuring that any patient with an abnormal finding receives timely diagnosis and treatment. Using The Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Model, the navigator accomplishes this most effectively through one-on-one contact with the patient at each point in the care continuum, from initial screening through final resolution of each patient's case. The purpose of this process is to eliminate barriers to diagnosis and treatment. Throughout the navigation process, patient navigators seek to bridge cultural and linguistic barriers, find financial resources, track appointments, coordinate transportation services, and much more.

Patient navigation has increased retention, diagnostic and treatment resolution rates over the years. In addition to the improved clinical outcomes for patients, the improved patient retention and adherence rates directly impact a facility's efficiencies, prevents lost revenue, and ultimately provides financial benefits to the facility.

Training and Certification Program

The Institute provides a three-day, comprehensive, interactive training curriculum focused on the core principles needed to establish and implement a patient navigation program and become certified in the Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Model.

The curriculum is multi-faceted, interactive, includes practical experience and reflects a combination of extensive research and information on best practices, taught by the foremost experts in patient navigation, including Dr. Freeman. The training also helps participants understand how they can tailor patient navigation programs to meet their community's specific needs.

National Database

The one-on-one contact between navigators and their patients provides invaluable insight into ways navigators can help patients as they manage the emotional, financial and other barriers they encounter on the way to receiving the care they need.

The Institute is creating a national database to collect these insights by allowing participating organizations to subscribe to a proprietary data collection tool used by individual navigators.

Ultimately, the data will be analyzed so that the Institute can share best practices in patient navigation.

For More Information

Healthcare organizations and individuals interested in starting or expanding a patient navigation program can call 212-537-5500 or visit www.hpfreemanpni.org, where they have the opportunity to learn The Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Model from the foremost experts.