Close to 1.5 million new cancer diagnoses are made yearly, mostly among patients presenting to a general medical practice. Following diagnosis, general internists play a critical role in caring for patients during their treatment and continuing through short-term and long-term survivorship. Across the continuum of cancer, general internists may function as the sole and principal provider in the care of their patients, as a single provider in a multispecialty team, or as a provider whose role is mostly supportive. These roles can vary over time and may relate to the patient’s cancer diagnosis, prognosis and preferences, provider factors such as knowledge and skills, and systems of care, such as organizational support, health information technology capacity, practice setting and geography. Since the goal of a medical home is to provide patient-centered care across a continuum of need for all patients, it is important to understand the different phases of care for cancer patients, explore optimal roles for the general internist across these phases of care, and optimize coordination of care for patients in a variety of clinical settings. While focusing on the care of a patient with cancer, the insights gained from this workshop may be readily applied to the generalist role in the coordinated management of other complex chronic diseases and can serve as a model for how the patient-centered medical home may function within accountable care organizations.

This workshop will feature case-based presentations that will highlight key issues in the care of a patient with cancer, from the time of diagnosis through long-term survivorship. The cases are meant to facilitate a discussion among the audience members and will be followed by commentary from the expert faculty panel.

Faculty
Dr. Larissa Neklyudov, Harvard Medical School
Dr. Claire Snyder, Johns Hopkins
Dr. Kimberly Peairs, Johns Hopkins
Dr. Linda Overholser, University of Colorado School of Medicine
Dr. Steve Atlas, Harvard Medical School
Dr. Katherine Kahn, University of California Los Angeles

Learning Objectives:
Through case presentations, active participation in group discussions and commentary from expert panelists, participants will

1. Gain a better understanding of the role general internists play in the care of patients with cancer and the potential benefits of having generalist involvement in their care.
2. Identify barriers in providing and opportunities to enhance patient-centered care for individuals with complex medical needs related to cancer and its treatment.
3. Recognize gaps in scientific evidence in this field and the potential emerging opportunities for research.
4. Be able to apply the insights about caring for patients with cancer to caring for those with other chronic medical conditions in the medical home.
Agenda

10 minutes: Introduction/overview - The many faces of general internists caring for patients across the cancer spectrum (Dr. Larissa Nekhlyudov)

60 minutes: Case presentations, with audience discussion and commentary by expert panel. (Drs. Larissa Nekhlyudov, Claire Snyder, Kimberly Peairs, Linda Overholser, Steve Atlas)

Case 1 will demonstrate key features of the generalists’ role in caring for patients with newly diagnosed cancer.

Case 2 will demonstrate key features of the generalists’ role in caring for patients undergoing active cancer treatment and transitioning off treatment.

Case 3 will demonstrate key features of the generalists’ role in long-term cancer survivorship care, with a particular focus on an adult survivor of childhood cancer.

For each of case, an interactive presentation, audience discussion and expert panel commentary will address the following questions:

1. What is the role of the general internist in caring for patients across the continuum of cancer, from diagnosis through survivorship?
2. What are the challenges for the general internist in caring for patients across particular phases of cancer care?
3. What systems-based factors may enhance care for patients in each phase of care and across the cancer care continuum?
4. What are effective strategies for communicating with the cancer specialists? Patients?
5. What are available resources to facilitate quality care?
6. What is the evidence base for generalists’ involvement in caring for cancer patients? Does the general internist make a difference in the process of care and/or outcomes?
7. What are remaining research questions and/or opportunities for research?

15 minutes: Summary of key observations and relevant research questions (Dr. Katherine Kahn)

5 minutes: Evaluations
References

Toward Improving the Quality of Cancer Care: Addressing the Interfaces of Primary and Oncology Related Subspecialty Care. Journal of the National Cancer Institute Monographs 2010. (Numerous articles addressing care across phases of cancer care).


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http://university.asco.org/focusunder40 (educational module for primary care providers focusing on timely cancer diagnosis and follow up of patients aged 15-39)

Zebrack B, Matthews-Bradshaw B, Siegel S. Quality Cancer Care for Adolescents and Young Adults: A Position Statement. Journal of Oncology 2010; 4882-67. (The entire November 2010 issue focuses on this age group of patients with cancer).

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