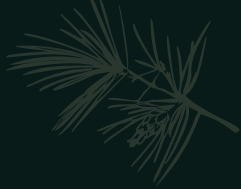


COMMUNITY CANCER CARE: NAVIGATING PARTNERSHIPS AND CHALLENGES



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ROSEBURG VA
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
OREGON





Introduction

- VA Nurse for 13 years
- Cancer Care Navigation Team (CCNT) RN for 9 years
- Developed/implemented the VISN 20 CCNT Program at our local VA
- Mom of 2 adventurous kiddos
- No disclosures



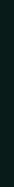
Agenda

- Partnership between CCNT and Community Care
- Fostering relationships with community cancer centers
- Lessons learned over 9 years
- Making change as “just” a CCNT RN





Partnership Between CCNT and Community Care



CCNT and Community Care

CCNT

- 1 FTE CCNT RN
- 0.5 FTE CCNT PSA (split with Palliative Care)



Roseburg VA Main
Campus

COMMUNITY CARE TEAM

- 3 NPs alpha split
- 28 RNs alpha split
- 52 MSAs/AMSAs split by specialty
- 1 MSA devoted to just Oncology referrals

Community Care Notifies CCNT

- Community Care RNs alert CCNT RN to all **new community cancer referrals**
 - Notified of **401** patients in **FY22** with Community Medical Oncology Referral
 - Notified of **420** patients (as of 8/22/23) in **FY23** with Community Medical Oncology Referral
- Community Care RNs notify CCNT RN of any **high suspicion**, for cancer types that may be better cared for by tertiary Portland VA facility than in local community (e.g., head and neck, liver, and lung cancers)

CCNT Contacts Veteran and Provides Education

NEW COMMUNITY CANCER REFERRAL

- How cancer care in the community works through VA Community Care/TRIWEST
- How to fill prescriptions written by community oncologist filled by VA pharmacy
- Identify and overcome barriers to cancer care in community (e.g., transportation, lodging, and animal care)
- Give CCNT's direct contact information

HIGH SUSPICION OR NEW DIAGNOSIS OF HEAD AND NECK, LIVER AND LUNG CANCERS

- Educates Veteran on specialty services available to tertiary center such as Portland VA
- Provides education about lodging and transportation options for Portland VA
- Empowers Veteran to make informed choice
- Ensures necessary referral and handoffs in place, no matter where Veteran chooses to receive care
- Give CCNT's direct contact information



Fostering Relationships With Community Cancer Centers

Community Cancer Centers Within Catchment

3 Small Cancer Centers

- 1-2 oncologists
- Rural locations
- Minimal public transportation

1 Large Cancer Center

- 25+ oncologists
- Medium-sized city
- Public transport within city limits



Veterans often have to travel 1-4 hours to get to closest community cancer center

Collaboration With Community Cancer Centers

- Establish great relationships with community cancer centers via in-person visits and find specific contacts at each location
- Provide each community cancer center with CCNT brochures and business cards
- Nurture the relationships with contacts, check-in at least quarterly
- Great relationships with community oncology offices helps facilitate timely access to cancer care for Veterans
- CCNT is able to know about potential Veteran cancer-related delays in care real-time and start looking for solutions immediately
- Act as a point of contact for them when they need VA medical records ASAP
(GOLDEN TICKET)



Lessons Learned Over 9 Years



Lessons Learned

- CCNT direct phone number (no extension)
- Distribute CCNT brochure and business cards EVERYWHERE...Emergency Rooms, Urgent Cares, Community Non-Profits, Senior Centers, and Churches
- **Thinking OUTSIDE THE BOX**
Many of the barriers to care for rural Veterans cannot be overcome via VA resources alone...develop relationships with community resources in each county of your catchment area
- **TAKE YOUR LEAVE** and celebrate small achievements as role can be emotionally exhausting



River Helper Abby McEnroe helps Valerie Alexander celebrate the catch and release.





Making Change as “Just”
a CCNT RN

Facility Changes – Led by CCNT RN

- Realized that in the 9 years of working as CCNT RN that I had never seen a screening MRI on a Veteran come across my desk
- Long-established relationships with Community Partners, Community Care, PACTs, and Women's Health Program allowed for quick problem solving

Community Care and PACTs said...

Screening breast MRIs are included in the COC with the mammogram and if the community radiologist feels it needs to be done they can perform the MRI.

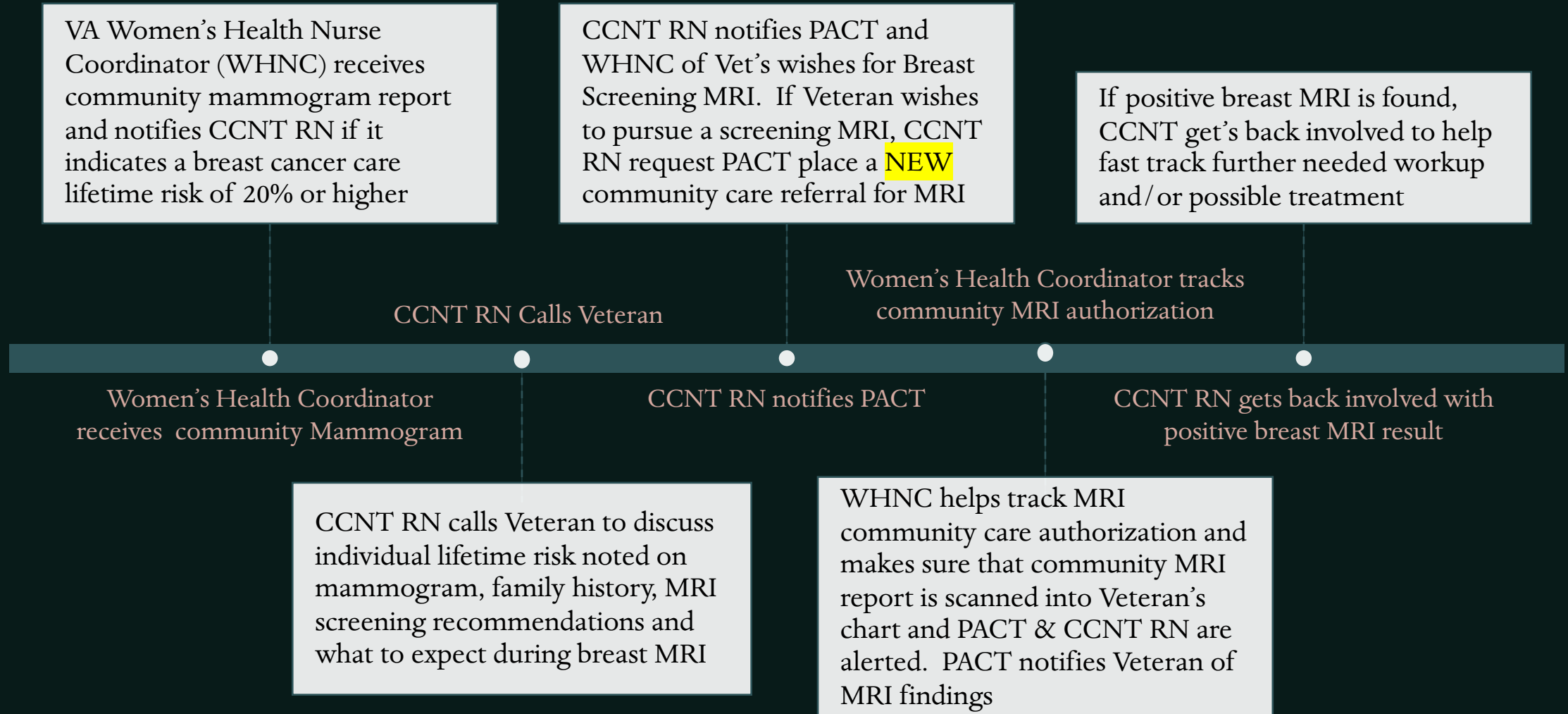
Women's Health said...

VA goes by the ACS recommendations for breast cancer screening. The radiologist determines the lifetime risk of breast cancer and our mammogram SEOC includes all imaging that is recommended including MRI if the radiologist determines that the Veteran needs this imaging.

Community Radiology Center said...

We place on the mammography report a patient's Breast Cancer Lifetime Risk and it is up to the primary care provider to have the discussion with Veteran about screening MRI and order it. We cannot just order it since the COC says it is authorized.

Timeline for Veteran Identified With High Lifetime Risk





Summary

Even though you may feel that you are just playing “Whack-A-Mole” each and everyday overcoming the next barrier as it comes up... you are making a lasting impact on our organization and the lives of your patients.



Thank You

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