



Diagnosis

Emotional Impact

Treatment/Side Effects

Survivorship

Patient Stories

New Navigators at Northwell

Northwell Health recently announced that their cancer patients will be offered navigation services, provided by licensed staff nurses.

Northwell's cancer care is spread over 10 centers, where over 400 cancer specialists treat close to 20,000 cancer patients annually.

The nurse / navigators will help cancer patients cut the "red tape" that invariably complicates their medical experience. By taking a bit of pressure off the patient and/or caregiver, the navigators can contribute to more positive outcomes for their patients.

Harold P. Freeman, MD the Father of Patient Navigation

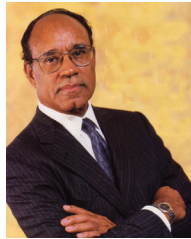
Dr. Freeman trained as an oncologist in the late 1960s at Memorial Sloan Kettering in NYC. He then took a post at Harlem Hospital, treating indigent cancer patients.

In Harlem, over a 22-year period, he measured the time it took for hundreds of his patients to reach two critically important mile-markers:

Mile-Marker #1. Once the first suspicious signs of cancer appear, how long until a definitive diagnosis is formulated?

Mile-Marker #2. After there is a diagnosis, how long does it take until treatment begins?

Freeman determined that the average amount of time it took for his indigent patients to reach the mile-markers was much longer than for those at MSK.



*Harold P.
Freeman, MD,
The Father of
Patient Navigation*

The First Patient Navigators

As a remedy, Freeman created a new position at the hospital - - cancer patient navigator. Navigators helped patients understand each important step in treatment, before they even embarked on their cancer journey.

The "unknown" - - one of their greatest sources of fear - - was minimized, and navigators remained at the patient's side, giving them, as we might call it today, a fighting chance.

Under the care of Dr. Freeman, the "War on Poverty" and the "War on Cancer" crossed paths. And at that intersection, something new was born: the cancer patient navigator.

The Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Institute

At some point in the late 1980s, Dr. Freeman was able to explain his mission to Ralph Lauren. Together, they dreamed up the idea of an academic institute to train navigators. Lauren funded a Harlem cancer center in 2003 and in 2007, The Harold P. Freeman Patient Navigation Institute - - where students could earn accreditation as patient navigators. - - was launched on West 123rd Street.

Once the Institute opened, several staff members and Directors of Fighting Chance, including Founder & Chairman, Duncan Darrow, attended the Institute. Patient Navigation then became an integral part of the free services offered to cancer patients and caregivers at our Sag Harbor office.

Dr. Freeman is now on the faculty of the Columbia University Medical School.

Fighting Chance has offices in
Sag Harbor and at the
Phillips Family Cancer Center
in Southampton.

For more details, or information
please call 631.725.4646
Visit our website at
www.fightingchance.org