

ACCC 2019 FINANCIAL ADVOCACY NETWORK PRE-CONFERENCE

TOP TAKEAWAYS

More than 100 financial navigators, cancer program leaders, and other members of the multi-disciplinary cancer care team attended this Pre-Conference on Wednesday, October 30, held during the ACCC 36th National Oncology Conference in Orlando, Fla.

Through live polling, attendees were able to submit questions and comments in sessions throughout the day. Members of the ACCC Financial Advocacy Network Advisory Committee then answered these questions in a robust Town Hall session where attendees also brought their own concerns and ideas to the table. Below Advisory Committee Chair Clara Lambert, BBA, OPN-CG, an oncology financial navigator at Advocate Good Samaritan Bhorade Cancer Center, and Committee Member Lori Schneider, business office manager at Green Bay Oncology, share their top five takeaways from the Pre-Conference.



Clara Lambert's Top Five Takeaways

ACCC Financial Advocacy Network Advisory Committee Chair 2018 - 2019

I was honored to facilitate this Pre-Conference with my fellow Advisory Committee Member, Lori Schneider. We had a full day of engaging conversations, and it was very exciting to have speakers from different organizations come together to share the innovations and strategies that have made them successful in financial navigation. My top takeaways from the day are:

1. ***There exists a continuing interest and quest for additional knowledge in financial navigation.*** Although ACCC has covered this topic in various meeting sessions for the past five years, members place value in a Pre-Conference devoted exclusively to this content.

2. Cancer programs continue to have a need for resources to support the growth of this service line. ACCC released its newest tool, "Making the Business Case for Hiring a Financial Navigator," authored by Lori Schneider and Christina Fuller, to great fanfare. I am hoping over the next two years to see hospitals and practices putting the business case study into play by adding financial navigation to their list of services. Access it online at acc-cancer.org/docs/projects/financial-advocacy/ufo-2019-fan-navigator-tool.pdf.

3. ACCC members are asking for financial navigation certification. This is a complicated endeavor, but I would love if ACCC can find a way to move this idea forward. In the past two years, as chair of the Financial Advocacy Network, I have often been asked if there is going to be a certification for financial navigation—beyond the existing Boot Camp.

4. Technological tools are evolving and can be a big help to financial navigation programs. A wide variety of technology tools and vendors are stepping up to facilitate financial navigation, specifically identifying ways to help with financial navigation workload and prioritization. Non-profit organizations are contributing with their own tools and ideas.

5. As a field, financial navigation continues to innovate to better meet our patients' needs. A common theme throughout the Pre-Conference was our quest to help cancer patients and support the financial health of our cancer programs. The energy and engagement from speakers and the audience was invigorating and revitalizing.

I always say one of the best tools a financial navigator can have is a network of colleagues who share their passion. This Pre-Conference afforded an excellent networking opportunity. ●



Lori Schneider's Top Five Takeaways

ACCC Financial Advocacy Network Advisory Committee Chair 2020

I was honored to help plan this hugely successful Pre-Conference. We featured speakers from health systems that have had financial navigation programs for more than 10 years, as well as those that are just now developing programs. While many valuable tips and tools were shared, my top five takeaways from the day included:

1. Financial toxicity continues to be a rising concern for patients and their families. Many of the day's speakers gave examples of what they are doing to help fight financial toxicity. Some included data points showing that even patients with insurance or those who receive co-pay assistance still face significant financial concerns. Out-of-pocket costs and insurance premiums continue to be a financial burden, especially when added to current household bills and a reduction of income due to an inability to work. Insurance optimization and coverage—along with foundation and patient assistance programs—are key factors to helping patients and families.

2. Financial navigators need more tools and resources to help optimize their programs. Live polling allowed attendees to ask questions that were then reviewed and answered at the end of each presentation. Financial navigators were shown a wide variety of tools—both commercial (proprietary) and homegrown solutions. For example, Advisory Committee Member, Angie Santiago, CRCS-I, *Thomas Jefferson University Health System, Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center*, presented spreadsheets and tools that she created to help with tracking and productivity, as well as a tool that is used to help patients compare insurance plans. The latter allows patients to choose a plan that best meets their individual and family needs.

3. There is an identified need for data and metrics reporting. Attendees received an overview of the ACCC Financial Advocacy Boot Camp module “Measuring and Reporting,” which showcased the importance of measuring and tracking patient data. Recommended items to track included Medicare-only patients, uninsured patients, patients who are receiving co-pay and/or foundation assistance, and patients that are receiving medication from pharmaceutical patient assistance programs. It is also important to track the number of patients each navigator works with and how much time is spent with patients in order to determine an average. These data can then be presented to management to help determine staffing needs.

4. Networking and learning from others are key because of the ever-changing landscape of financial navigation. There is always something new to learn by networking with our peers—whether it be processes, tools, or resources. With the landscape of oncology constantly changing, it is difficult to stay on top of all updates. Attendees agreed that the ACCC Financial Advocacy Boot Camp is one of the best training tools for financial navigators. Another important resource: the ACCC Financial Advocacy Network Guidelines. Our Pre-Conference ended with an ACCC Financial Advocacy Town Hall where subject matter experts and attendees benefited alike from an engaged Q&A and brainstorming session.

5. Financial navigation programs are not a one-size-fits-all. Throughout the day, speakers demonstrated that health systems create financial navigation programs that are tailor made to fit their organization. For example, Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center highlighted its optimization project that resulted from one of the ACCC’s Financial Advocacy Learning Labs. Access online at: accc-cancer.org/FANLearningLabs. More, financial navigation programs originate out of a variety of departments in a cancer center, including pharmacy, social work, or revenue cycle/billing. Finally, there is also a variety of focus points across the financial navigation landscape due to how these programs grow within the healthcare system. Focus areas for these programs include insurance optimization, foundation and/or co-pay assistance, pharmaceutical patient assistance for oral and/or IV medications, and the completion of authorizations, as well as programs that include a mix of these.

The knowledge shared, friendships made, and follow-up conversations that continued throughout the conference were a highlight of this Pre-Conference. I know that together we can all help make a difference in the fight against financial toxicity. ●

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The **Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC)** is the leading education and advocacy organization for the cancer care community. Founded in 1974, ACCC is a powerful network of 25,000 multidisciplinary practitioners from 2,100 hospitals and practices nationwide. As advances in cancer screening and diagnosis, treatment options, and care delivery models continue to evolve—so has ACCC—adapting its resources to meet the changing needs of the entire oncology care team. For more information, visit accc-cancer.org or call 301.984.9496. Join our social media communities; read our blog, ACCCBuzz; and tune in to our podcast, CANCER BUZZ.

The **ACCC Financial Advocacy Network** is the leader in providing professional development training, tools, and resources that will empower providers to proactively integrate financial health into the cancer care continuum and help patients gain access to high quality care for a better quality of life.

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