The Cancer Survivorship Transition to Employment Project

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ABSTRACT

The Learning Innovations and Academic Development Department at George Brown College is working with the Breast Cancer Survivorship Program at Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) to create a highly innovative blended learning program designed to assist breast cancer survivors reintegrate into the workforce during and after their cancer journey.

KEYWORDS

Cancer, survivorship, digital literacy

BACKGROUND

The project is creating STEP (Survivorship Transition Employment Project) as a training course on the transition back to work. The program is designed to support survivors returning to their previous work as well as those who experience side effects or chronic disease issues that are a barrier to pursuing this option. The model holds significant promise of applicability across a range of contexts, including other training programs for cancer survivors, and those living with other chronic diseases.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

The specific objective of this proposal is to research employment transition needs of cancer survivors, and to use this research to design and create online modules to form the Survivorship Transition Employment Project. STEP focuses on the development of patient competencies and skills required to refocus energies for returning to work after long treatment regimens. LIAD is providing the digital literacy modules for the project. The project is using the participatory design method to design and develop the modules. Data will be collected from various participants at multiple points in the project using surveys, interviews, focus groups, workshops, and participant observation. Our analysis plan includes qualitative review of survivor experience within the STEP learning environments, responses to focus groups, interviews, and surveys, and use of data to support course design.

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS/APPLICATIONS

The project was initiated in January of 2007, and continues until December 2008. Results will be used as part of clinical education programs at PMH, as well as the development of patient competencies and return to work supports.

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