

## Organization-wide Approach to NAPBC Accreditation: The Inova Process

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*Inova Health System* is a not-for-profit health-care system based in Northern Virginia that includes five hospitals and other health services. Inova Breast Care Institute (IBCI) was established in 2008 with the mission to provide a system-wide world-class breast care program. The hallmark of the IBCI is a seamless approach to early detection, diagnosis, treatment, education, research, and support for all patients with breast disease. Inova Health System sees approximately 1,000 new breast cancer patients per year.

It takes a village to build a system-wide integrated breast care service line. In the same vein, it takes a system-wide organizational commitment to achieve a breast center of excellence accreditation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC).

In the fall of 2008, the executive leadership team of the Inova Health System's Inova Breast Care Institute in Northern Virginia became interested in the newly established NAPBC program. NAPBC accreditation represented an opportunity to unify and recognize the breast program of all five of the not-for-profit Inova Health System hospitals (Inova Alexandria Hospital, Inova Fairfax Hospital, Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, Inova Loudoun Hospital, and Inova Mount Vernon Hospital) around the 27 standards of excellence. "We are dedicated to providing seamless state-of-the-art care throughout the IBCI," said Bellinda Conte, executive director, Inova Cancer Services.

Then, the leadership considered the options of either a hub and satellite model or each hospital achieving accreditation separately. In the hub and satellite model, Inova Fairfax Hospital, the system's largest hospital, would be the hub with the other hospitals as satellites. One application would be submitted for the hub and satellites together. Given the strength of each program, the commitment and dedication of each hospital's Inova Breast Care Institute local steering committee, and the system-wide Inova Breast Care Institute executive steering committee's support, the decision was made for each hospital to go through the accreditation and survey process.

The physicians and staff of the Inova Breast Care Institute at Inova Fairfax Hospital went through the application process first. The committee leading the process was similar to the Inova Breast Care Institute local steering committee for the hospital. It included a physician champion, the breast nurse navigator, the tumor registrar, a radiology representative, and an administrative champion. They developed and implemented a work project matrix to accumulate the nec-

### 10 Tips for a Successful Survey

- ✓ Start early in the accreditation process.
- ✓ Be inclusive. Develop a steering team that meets regularly and is comprised of multiple different representatives from system and local hospital leadership (physician champion, tumor registrar, navigator, administrative director, etc).
- ✓ Develop a work project matrix including the standards, documentation requirements, current status, due dates, and responsible parties.
- ✓ Create a documentation binder with tabs for each standard.
- ✓ Create a documentation binder for physician and staff documents.
- ✓ Learn from each other and make sure that you contact representatives at the NAPBC for any questions.
- ✓ Ensure that your tumor board conference is well represented and organized.
- ✓ Listen to the surveyor. Surveyors not only survey what your program has accomplished but also provide recommendations on how to become an even better program.
- ✓ After the survey, aggregate the comments and develop action plans to implement the recommendations in both individual and system-wide programs.
- ✓ Develop a marketing and public relations plan to raise awareness of the accreditation.

essary documents for the Survey Application Record. The team met monthly in the beginning of the process and then weekly as they came closer to the date of the survey. The tumor registrar, breast navigator, and physician champion were critical in pulling the information together and obtaining support from all the constituents. Inova Fairfax Hospital underwent their survey in June 2009 and received their formal notification in July 2009.

Over the next five months, the breast programs at the four other Inova Health System hospitals followed the same successful model in preparation for their survey. The process at each hospital took between three to six months of detailed preparation. "We learned a great deal from each other," said Tamara Pauling, program director, Inova Alexandria Hospital Cancer Center. After each survey, the teams reviewed the comments and suggestions made by each surveyor and learned valuable tips from the experience. (See "10 Tips for a Successful Survey" for more.) By the start of 2010, all five hospitals had undergone successful surveys and received accreditation. 📄

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