

Providence Oncology & Hematology Care Clinic – Westside

by Patricia Giannetti



Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside is one of four oncology and hematology physician groups serving patients at Providence Cancer Center in Portland, Oregon. Its six physicians and one OCN nurse practitioner are employed by Providence Health & Services, a large healthcare system. They are supported by eight oncology-certified RNs, and each physician is assigned a medical assistant. The practice operates in a medical office building on the Providence St. Vincent Medical Center campus, and oncologists primarily round in that hospital as well. The practice offers medical oncology and hematology services; radiation therapy is provided in the hospital. Most of the patients seen at Providence Oncology and Hematology-Westside live within 50 miles of the practice, which sees about 960 new patients each year.

Medication Reconciliation

Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside uses the Centricity/Logician electronic health record system from GE Healthcare, which includes a medication list and update function. The EHR is not oncology-specific, and its interface with the EHR used across the Providence hospitals does not include transfer of medication lists unless the patient received hospital-based care from one of the Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside physicians. Because many primary care physicians employed by Providence Health & Services use the same EHR, oncologists at Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside can view medication lists and other aspects of the EHR when a referral comes from those primary care physician practices.

Patients who are referred either from the hospital or from many primary care practices are asked by Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside staff to bring a list of current medications with them to the first appointment. Patients receive a printed medication list at discharge from a Providence Health & Services hospital. When a patient arrives, Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside's nurse practitioner reviews the patient's history and medication list verbally with the patient, while the medical assistant enters medication information into the patient's EHR. The EHR medication list includes drop-down menus to select dosages, as well as categories for frequency, and reason for taking the drug. At every subsequent appointment with a practice oncologist, a medical assistant opens the medication list in the EHR and reviews and updates the information with the patient in a face-to-face exchange.

After Care Visit Report

Because cancer patients are prone to hospital admission over the course of cancer treatment, Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside developed an After Care Visit Report, or patient instructions, that are provided to patients after each physician office visit (see Figure 1, at right). The After Care Visit Report includes a description of what occurred at the appointment, including infusions and medications prescribed, as well as the telephone number to reach oncologists after hours. The After Care Visit Report puts vital information into the patients' hands—and the medical record—at each visit.

The intent of the After Care Visit Report is to reduce errors and smooth transitions should the patient's condition become acute and hospital admission become necessary. Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside instructs patients to come to the practice if a problem surfaces during business hours. If a hospital admission is required, the medical assistant working with the patient's oncologist calls the oncology floor to reserve a bed, and the admission is made directly from the practice to the oncology unit. The intent is to help vulnerable cancer patients avoid long waits in the emergency room for acute issues.

Transitions from the hospital to care by the physician practice are aided by clerical staff who make the patient appointments after receiving referrals, and then call patients to remind them of appointments. Another key team member is the practice nurse practitioner, who fleshes out a detailed medication history at each patient's first visit, prior to the oncologist's consultation.

Critical Transition Steps

Use of a common medication list within the EHR and across Providence Health & Services physician office practices has streamlined the medication reconciliation process. Face-to-face medication reconciliation at every physician office appointment ensures that the record remains up-to-date and accurate. New medications are added to the EHR-based medication list as they are prescribed by the practice oncologist. Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside regularly uses electronic prescribing for all non-narcotic medications. Physician order entry is accomplished using voice recognition software, which allows physicians to immediately send orders for chemotherapy into electronic flow sheets. 🗨️

Patricia Giannetti is financial counselor at Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside in Portland, Oregon.

Figure 1. Providence Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-Westside After Care Visit Report

This document contains confidential information about your health and care. It is provided directly to you and is for your personal, private use only.

PART 1. VISIT INFORMATION

Date:

Location:

Provider:

Vital Signs:

Blood Pressure:

Pulse:

Temperature:

Height:

Weight:

Body Mass Index (BMI):

Reason For Visit:

PART 2. PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

Future Appointments with Other Providers:

Appointment information may not be complete. It is your responsibility to keep your appointments. Please be sure that your appointments will be covered by your insurance before the scheduled visit or test.

PART 3. MEDICATIONS

New Medications—Take Prescription to Your Pharmacy:

Medications Changed During this Visit: _____

Medications Stopped During this Visit: _____

Current Medication List:

This list of current medications is based on your Providence medical record. Medications prescribed by non-Providence providers may not be on this list. If this list is not complete and accurate, please notify your physician's office.

PART 4. HEALTH REMINDERS

Services Due: