



Implementation of Support to Survival



A PATIENT'S STORY OF HIS SURVIVORSHIP JOURNEY

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The Pit River Health Services, Inc. (PRHS) clinic has established clinical protocols that provide their newly diagnosed cancer patients with quality care that goes above and beyond. The PRHS clinic is “rural” but is called “frontier” due to the length of time it takes to reach tertiary services or specialized cancer centers. Because of this, they have identified a team-based approach that targets the needs of their cancer survivors. Their team-based approach focuses on the patient's particular needs whether it be wound care, drug therapy assistance, diabetes management, screening services, case management, or prevention efforts, including access to education on healthy eating practices. Nursing staff, providers and medical assistants are actively involved with coordination of a patient's needs for specialty services and follow through by addressing issues of transportation, setting up appointments, and patient progress. As a team, they work to reduce the emotional, mental, and financial burden that can come along with a cancer diagnosis.

In one particular case, the PRHS began follow-up care with a 59 year old male AIAN patient who had undergone a colonoscopy that resulted in the diagnosis of a large mass in his sigmoid colon. After having the mass surgically removed, the patient contacted PRHS staff to assist him with follow-up care and support. While establishing a foundation of trust by using the caring paradigm, PRHS staff provided the patient with support to continue to follow through with his diagnosis and treatments that he needed in order to survive as a cancer patient. The patient demonstrated great willpower and endurance with the support given to him. The patient's desire to obtain proper care upon identifying the colon cancer, demonstrates that the protocols established early on with nursing staff, medical assistants, and providers were a great impact to his survivorship. The patient has since returned to work while continuing with his chemotherapy and is doing well through his treatment.