

2019

HIGHLIGHTS



YUMA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
CANCER CENTER



*"A big factor in getting my genetic testing done was that I didn't have to go out of town."
– Keena Grande, patient*

Bringing the Power of Genetic Screening Close to Home

There have been many significant advances in cancer care, including the ability to determine whether patients have a genetic risk of developing certain types of cancer. But until recently, patients in the Yuma area had to travel to Phoenix, San Diego or Tucson to receive the genetic testing or counseling needed to determine their risk.

That changed in 2019, when the Yuma Regional Medical Center Cancer Center began collaborating with Myriad Genetics to help cancer patients in the Yuma area receive genetic counseling and testing without having to leave town.

"We feel that 15 to 30 percent of cancers could be related to genetic causes," said Abhinav Chandra, MD, Medical Director of the Cancer Center. "In the past, testing was very limited and not everyone was able to get it. Now, any patient diagnosed with cancer can have this screening performed at the Cancer Center."

"To facilitate patient consultations, Myriad hosts tele-education sessions with genetic counselors, including Spanish-speaking counselors when needed," explained Erica Martinez, RN, HPN, OCN, oncology nurse navigator for the Cancer Center. "Then, if genetic testing is warranted, we collect

samples from the patients and send them out to be tested. When we receive the results, we can counsel them right here at our Cancer Center."

This unique collaboration with Myriad earned the Cancer Center national recognition when it received the 2019 Innovator Award by the Association of Community Cancer Centers. "This award highlights the impact that this project brings to a community like ours," Dr. Chandra said. The program also earned first place for Clinical Excellence and was named the Grand Champion in YRMC's 2019 QUALITY Hall of Fame Awards.

The program has had a big impact on Yuma-area resident Keena Grande. When she was diagnosed with breast cancer, even though there was no family history, she met with Dr. Chandra and decided to undergo genetic testing at the Cancer Center. "I have sisters and nieces and we were concerned that cancer might be an issue for them in the future," Keena explained.

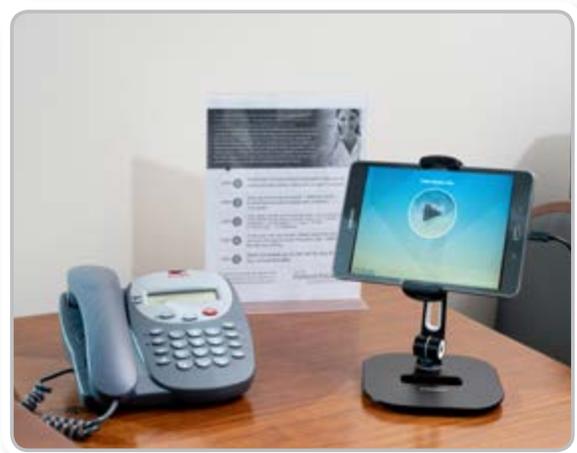
The test results brought good news for Keena and her family. She learned she was not carrying a breast cancer gene. "It gave me huge peace of mind," she said.

222 *Patients*

NUMBER OF PATIENTS THAT COMPLETED THE HEREDITARY CANCER QUIZ OVER A FOUR-MONTH PERIOD.

4X *Increase*

THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CANCER CENTER PATIENTS WHO HAD GENETIC TESTS COMPLETED WITHIN THE FIRST FEW MONTHS OF THE PROGRAM.



Using technology to provide genetic screening.

Reducing Cancer Patient Visits to the Emergency Department

According to the Cancer Network, an estimated 44 percent of patients receiving active cancer treatment visit the emergency department in their first year of treatment. These visits are often prompted by common symptoms such as anemia, nausea, vomiting, pain, sepsis, dehydration, fever, neutropenia (abnormally low white blood cell count) and diarrhea.

The number of Yuma Regional Medical Center Cancer Center patients receiving active IV chemotherapy treatment who visit the emergency department is well below the national average, the Cancer Center staff still wanted to find a way to reduce the number

“In our chemotherapy teaching packet, we used to walk patients through how to get to the triage nurse through the phone tree,” explained Cancer Center provider Bridgett Allen, FNP-C, AOCNP. “Now we give them the number for the triage line, which is staffed by a dedicated triage nurse. We also created a rollover system so if the triage line, isn’t answered, patients don’t have to leave a message. The call will go to the charge nurse and then to another chemotherapy nurse, so that somebody live is always answering that phone.”

The triage line is staffed during regular business hours. For patients who need assistance after

“We’re educating patients not just to call us, but to call us as soon as they start having problems,”

of visits cancer patients make to the emergency department that could potentially have been avoided. These patients already have weakened immune systems, so it’s important to avoid exposing them to other illnesses whenever possible.

The solution the Cancer Center team developed was to give patients faster access to a triage nurse. Patients can call to share their symptoms or concerns with the nurse who can immediately assess them and determine the appropriate next steps.

hours, there is always a physician on call. So, help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

“We’re educating patients not just to call us, but to call us as soon as they start having problems,” said Mary Sweigart, RN, OCN, Cancer Center nurse and quality leader. “There are a lot of things we can take care of here, especially if we’re notified early. We’re getting the word out in a better, more consistent way that we want to be able to keep patients out of the hospital and away from expensive emergency room visits.”

10% *Reduction*

REDUCTION IN UNNECESSARY VISITS TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ONCE NEW TRIAGE PROCEDURES WERE ESTABLISHED.

24 *Hours*

NUMBER OF HOURS EACH DAY A TRIAGE NURSE OR PHYSICIAN ON CALL IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST CHEMOTHERAPY PATIENTS IF THEY HAVE QUESTIONS OR ARE EXPERIENCING ISSUES.



*Cancer Center provider,
Bridget Allen, FNP-C, AOCNP*



20 *Attendees*

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES WHO WERE REFERRED TO THEIR DOCTOR AT THE BOOMERS AND BEYOND LIVING EXPO FOR BEING IDENTIFIED AS HAVING A HIGH OR INCREASED RISK OF DEVELOPING BREAST OR COLON CANCER.

9,800+ *Residents*

RESIDENTS REACHED THROUGH 32 COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS ATTENDED BY OUR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER.

Taking Action to Prevent Cancer

At the Yuma Regional Medical Center Cancer Center, we not only diagnose and treat cancer—we believe in going out into the community to educate and screen our residents. We feel it is important to help them minimize their risk of developing this disease and knowing how to recognize it early.

“We go by the motto of ‘prevention is better than a cure,’” said Abhinav Chandra, MD, Medical Director of the Yuma Regional Medical Center Cancer Center.

In the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by YRMC, cancer was identified as one of the top health issues in Yuma County. To help spread the message about the importance of cancer screening and prevention, the Cancer Center Cancer Committee decided to participate in two major community outreach events.

At the Boomers and Beyond Living Expo, more than 600 seniors were given the opportunity to be evaluated for their risk of breast and colon cancer by Cancer Center clinical staff and to be educated about the comprehensive cancer services and treatment available in Yuma. Participants were also able to listen to a presentation on cancer survivorship and speak with an oncologist to have their questions answered about cancer prevention.

The Cancer Center also participated in the City of Yuma Employee Health Fair to educate more than 300 city employees about the importance of breast cancer screening and lifestyle factors that can help prevent cancer. Employees were also evaluated to see if they were due for a mammogram and given the

opportunity to schedule a mammogram, if needed. Cancer Center staff also engaged attendees with a fun, interactive cancer prevention quiz.

The Cancer Center is proud of having a dedicated community health worker who participates in many other health-related fairs and events to educate the community about screening and prevention.

“Our community health worker reaches thousands of people every year,” Dr. Chandra said. “Many of these people are part of an underserved or underinsured population. So, we’re making sure that they are also able to be part of the healthcare system and get the information and services they need.”

“These events also help us get the word out to the community that you don’t have to go to Phoenix or Tucson to get your cancer care,” said Cathy Cowan Butler, NP, Executive Director of the Cancer Center. “We’re seeing patients come in from the community who were unaware we were here.”



City of Yuma Employee Health Fair

0 Employees

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO ATTENDED THE CITY OF YUMA EMPLOYEE HEALTH FAIR WHO WERE IDENTIFIED AS HAVING A HIGH OR INCREASED RISK OF DEVELOPING BREAST CANCER.

95 Employees

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE CANCER PREVENTION QUIZ AT THE CITY OF YUMA EMPLOYEE HEALTH FAIR.



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CANCER CENTER

yumaregional.org/CancerCare