

Putting the Pieces Together: Critical Elements of Successful Patient Navigation

Among the many helpful modules included in Catholic Health Initiatives' (CHI) Navigation Program Resource Guide is a set of evidence-based recommendations and best practices in patient navigation. These interlocking pieces are critical to any successful navigation program.

ADVANCE PLANNING & DEFINED GOALS



Many programs have hired navigators without clearly defining organizational needs, the navigator role, or what they hope to achieve. Advance planning and defined goals can help ensure these critical programs are not under-utilized — and have the intended positive impact on patient care.



PROCESS ANALYSIS

Navigation programs can't be successful if they are applied as a band-aid to operational strain — whether caused by increased patient volume, treatment complexity or care fragmentation. It is important to analyze existing processes and take steps to address the root causes of delays or gaps in care prior to launching a navigation program.

RIGOROUS NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Following internal process improvement, program leaders should undertake a rigorous needs assessment to identify any remaining patient needs — gaps in care, operational bottlenecks, market opportunities, etc. Findings from this analysis can then be used to inform navigator program and role development.



ONGOING MEASUREMENT

Program leaders often face pressure to quantify the benefits of investing in navigation services. Two key opportunities can be found in analyzing revenue from new or returning patients who were attracted to navigation services; and tracking patient satisfaction among program enrollees.