

TurningPoint Breast Cancer Rehabilitation

The purpose of the program is to continue to remove financial and geographic barriers to evidence-based physical and emotional breast cancer recovery care to all women and men in Georgia. Underserved individuals during and after treatment for breast cancer living outside metro Atlanta will be served by the program. Key activities include, continued use of our Oncology Rehabilitation Patient Navigator (ORPN), providing in-clinic and telerehabilitation to include virtual physical therapy, counseling, nutrition and exercise, and outreach and education for oncology healthcare providers regarding the benefits of breast cancer rehabilitation in improving patient outcomes and reducing recurrence.

We will also be expanding our current programming to further lymphedema education through self-management training via self-circumferential measures. This promotes earlier detection and independence in monitoring symptoms. Breast cancer related lymphedema is one of the negative sequelae of breast cancer and its subsequent treatment, impacting nearly 20% of all survivors. It is often one of the most feared side effects of breast cancer treatment and can have a negative impact on health-related quality of life (Gillipsie, 2018). Literature strongly supports early detection and prospective surveillance of lymphedema in order to initiate early intervention and promote improved outcomes.

Evaluation methods will include numbers of patient visits with accompanying demographic information, financial and transportation assistance provided to access care, and clinical outcomes (distress/wellbeing, pain, mobility, and function). We will also track patients impacted through our lymphedema self-measurement training workshops and educational videos. To our knowledge, this program is the first of its kind in the U.S. to target both geographic and financial barriers to breast cancer rehabilitation to reduce disparity in survivorship outcomes. As such, it will improve survivorship outcomes in patients impacted by the program and serve as a model for providing specialized rehabilitation care to underserved cancer patients in Georgia and other states.