

UT Southwestern Pancreas Cancer Program

Developing a bold, transformative strategic plan for a pancreatic cancer program as a pilot for how to transform care delivery across a Learning Health Network (LHN).

BACKGROUND

Pancreas cancer is one of the few cancers that is increasing in incidence, with a five year survival rate of only 12%. Canopy Cancer Collective was established to transform systems of care and improve quality of life and survival for people with pancreatic cancer. Their LHN aims to build the capacity of cancer centers across the US to adopt and deliver “Canopy-Level Care,” a person-centered, team-based pancreatic cancer care model. They recognized that transforming care at each center required a vision, plan, leadership buy-in, and committed, sustainable funding. In 2022, Canopy identified two forward-thinking cancer centers from their LHN to pave the way by developing strategic plans for how to move towards Canopy-Level Care. This case study shared the success of UT Southwestern’s planning process.

SOLUTION

Between February and May 2023, we engaged a cross-functional team of oncologists, nurses, APPs, and supportive care specialists at UTSW in a series of workshops, weekly meetings, and working sessions and guided them to conduct a needs assessment, SWOT analysis, and patient focus groups. Armed with new data, together, we helped them build a vision, priority areas, goals, and metrics for their program and develop a 5 year strategic roadmap and implementation plan for how to optimize and transform their pancreas cancer program and improve provider experience and patient outcomes.

OUTCOMES

A Visionary Strategic Roadmap for their Program

The team developed a thoughtful, data-driven strategic roadmap and budget for their pancreas program which aligned with the institution’s existing strategic and operational plans. They are the first department to build a robust, detailed plan at their cancer center.

Clarity on their Differentiators and Care Model

The team developed a framework and name for their program called the “4-Dimensional” Model of Pancreatic Cancer Care.

Leadership Buy-In & Commitment

Through a process of stakeholder mapping and strategic leadership engagement, the team received the support of their VP leaders to fund several critical positions and the budget necessary to engage in a nationwide Learning Health Network.

Leading the Pack

The UTSW team emerged as leaders at their own cancer center and among the 14 cancer centers in the Canopy LHN, ready to share their learnings and coach other centers to develop their own plans.

CLIENT CASE STUDY



INSIGHTS

CHALLENGES

- Clinical teams lack bandwidth and time for creative thinking and strategic planning.
- Health system complexity makes planning convoluted and a non-linear process.
- Meaningful and collaborative cross-departmental planning requires coordination.
- Team-based care is not the status quo; planning to measure it is hard.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Teams are hungry for transformation skills and opportunity to optimize care processes.
- LHNs allow for fast learning and deep sharing if leveraged well.
- Don’t reinvent the wheel; use evidence-based tools for strategic planning.
- Build an economy of scale by investing in a process that’s replicable across centers.

UT Southwestern Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center		STRATEGIC MAP 2024-2028 to Deliver 4-Dimensional Pancreatic Cancer Care	
PROGRAMMATIC MISSION		PROGRAMMATIC VISION	
TO REVOLUTIONIZE PANCREATIC CANCER CARE placing the patient at the center & providing the highest quality treatment at the forefront of medicine, technology, & innovation		We are building a future where all patients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have improved survival • Are empowered to overcome adversity • Achieve the highest quality of life • Are fully supported and thrive alongside their providers 	
FOUR-DIMENSIONAL (4-D) CARE DELIVERY MODEL			
1. Subspecialty treatment & supportive care on one team	2. Future of cancer treatment, today	3. Accessibility across the care trajectory	4. Adaptable to changing patient needs and goals
APPROACH TO ENHANCING 4-D CARE DELIVERY			
PRIORITY AREAS		GOALS	
A. OPTIMIZE FOR GROWTH IN PATIENT VOLUME		Expand capacity, improve efficiency & optimize care team's balance of research, clinical, and administrative time.	
B. INCREASE NEW PATIENT ACCESS		Pioneer a model of optimal access to pancreatic cancer treatment	
C. DELIVER FULL 4-DIMENSIONAL SUPPORT		Inculcate & deploy a forward-thinking model of coordinated care across the care trajectory to provide right service at the right time.	
D. CONTINUOUS QI & OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT		Lead UTSW Cancer Center in "Triple-use" data utilization to drive improvements in patient outcomes, quality & research.	

Polaris Global Health Solutions:

Your guide to optimized processes, patient experience & profitability

For health system leadership who struggle to deliver humanized care without sacrificing revenue, we develop solutions that allow your patients, your teams, and your bottom line to thrive by:

- Identifying what matters most to patients and re-designing services around measuring those outcomes.
- Analyzing the culture of teams and strengthening their ability to work at the top of their licenses, as a cohesive unit.
- Deploying strategies that move you closer to delivering high-value care.

The Polaris Approach to High-Value Care



Health Systems

- Care delivery model development / evaluation / enhancement
- Revenue cycle optimization
- Process improvement
- Technology adoption



Pharma, Med Tech & Payers

- Creative convenings to achieve unprecedented results
- Codesigning communications with patients
- Crafting conversations with care teams



Care Teams

- Team-building & cohesion
- Addressing / avoiding burnout & compassion fatigue
- Team redesign
- Culture change



Public Health, Safety Net Providers & Governmental Agencies

- Community needs assessments
- Program development & implementation
- Innovative financial methodologies



Patients & Families

- Program & service development
- Patient experience improvement
- Patient and family engagement, communication, and education

We guide you along your unique path working alongside you until we achieve optimal results together.

