



Pink Lemonade Project/OHSU Community Partnership Program Grant: Developing a community standard of care for those diagnosed with breast cancer across Oregon.



Background/Introduction

Early in the pandemic, cancer centers across the nation and Oregon canceled their cancer support programs as non-essential medical care. Breast cancer patients were forced to look elsewhere for essential assistance and community support.

Pink Lemonade Project (PLP) helped fill the gaps and expanded its local support for breast cancer patients. A virtual format allowed PLP to serve more individuals with our psychological, emotional and financial support programs.

Furthermore, as the local Komen affiliate closed on March 31, 2021, Pink Lemonade Project stepped up to maintain two locally-grown Komen programs that met critical community need--the MBC Dinner Series and the Treatment Access Program (TAP), a transportation assistance program that served all of Oregon and reduced the geographic barrier to care.

Healthcare staff across Oregon have been strained and unable to maintain and update resource information for breast cancer patients.

Program Goals and Objectives

Goals/Objectives:

1. **Activate existing, local breast cancer coalition to gather and update information about community resources & peer supports for those diagnosed with breast cancer.**
2. **Serve as a neutral convener and invite nurse navigators and oncology social workers to combine and compile individual health systems' health and community support information available and distributed to patients.**
3. **Pilot disseminating newly developed, comprehensive community support information to participants of the Treatment Access Program (TAP) and test whether patients who need transportation assistance and are interested in additional emotional and psychological community supports, when offered.**

Methods-Project Design

Target Population: Breast cancer patients and breast cancer providers across Oregon.

Activities/efforts/initiatives:

- Coalition of local breast cancer support organizations.
- Hold information sessions for healthcare providers on PLP programs and especially how to complete financial aid program applications.
- Comprehensive review of 6 healthcare partners' breast cancer patient binders and welcome information by patients.
- Provided recommendations of standardized topics and information for healthcare systems to include in their patient information binders.

Time frame of the project: September 2021- June 2022

Evaluation tools: follow up tracking, interviews, pre/post tests- trainings sessions, surveys of binder content

Results

Objective 1:

- An average of 10 Portland breast cancer organizations regularly attended the 4 collaboration meetings from 9/2021 to 6/2022, sharing organization activities and events. Collaboration also pooled resources to light Morrison Bridge pink for Breast Cancer Awareness Month as sign of tribute to departing Komen and to recognize healthcare workers tireless effort to help breast cancer patients during the pandemic.

Key Breast Cancer Coalition Partners:



Objective 2:

- Binders were collected from Compass Oncology, Kaiser Permanente, Legacy, OHSU, PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center, and Providence.
- 11 breast cancer patients completed surveys evaluating the content and organization of the binders, including a Spanish-native-speaker and survivor, and two patients living with metastatic breast cancer.
- PLP compiled and updated a list of community and national resources and returned the standardized resource information back to all participating health systems.
- 67 health professionals from 15 organizations/health systems across Oregon were trained on PLP programs and resources, and on how to complete applications for Pink Lemonade Project's financial aid programs, including Treatment Access Program and Pink Practicalities.

Objective 3:

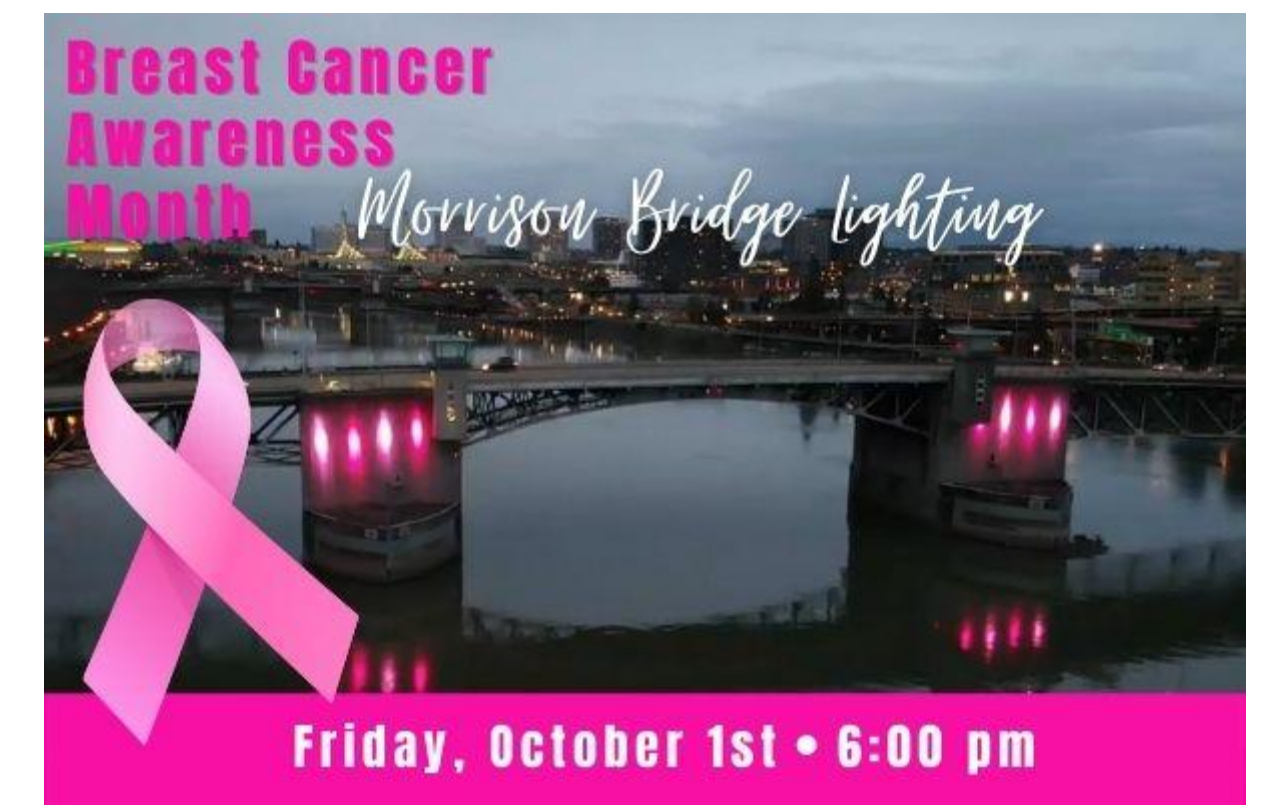
- As of 3/31/22, 126 breast cancer patients across Oregon had received TAP assistance.
- As of 3/31/22, 33 people had completed the survey (26% of total).
- We talked with 7 patients who returned the survey, and then provided additional support information. Other patients did not return messages.

Conclusions

The project's main strength was that Pink Lemonade Project could draw upon on an existing coalition of local, community-based breast cancer organizations to help update and standardize breast cancer support information from the patient point of view. Then by acting as a neutral convener, PLP could request and receive the binders from all the region's healthcare providers to help standardize and update the community resources across all the region's cancer centers. The result is that any new breast cancer patient, regardless of where their access to care is, can receive consistent community-based information and resources.

Another result of this project showed the importance of the partnership of healthcare and human service agencies, especially in a post-pandemic world. As the pandemic continues to strain healthcare, community-based nonprofits have a unique role to help coordinate community resources and improve the quality of life for those affected by breast cancer.

Due to current program design of TAP and contract with 211info, PLP does not receive adequate patient contact information to make pilot a success, but in future as a HIPAA-compliant entity, PLP could try again.



Key Partners/Funders/Acknowledgements

Key Healthcare Partners:

- 211info, Compass Oncology, Kaiser Permanente, Legacy, OHSU, PeaceHealth SW Medical Center, Providence and Legacy

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