

Overview of the Course

It is estimated that the cancer burden in India is likely to increase from an approximate incidence of 1 million cases in 2012 to about 1.7 million in 2035. Over the years, **Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH)** has witnessed a steady increase in the number of cancer cases registered. In 2010, about 53,000 new cancer cases were registered in TMH. Currently, 65,000 new cancer patients and 450,000 follow-ups are registered annually. More so, 40% of the patients visiting TMH come from Maharashtra (15% from Mumbai alone), while 60% of the patients come from other states of the country.

The increasing burden of the disease coupled with diversity of patient population and multi-disciplinary and complex nature of cancer-care necessitates creation of a dynamic network for efficient patient navigation for addressing diverse patient needs. With the ever-increasing number of patients visiting the Hospital each year, it is impossible to do justice to every interaction a doctor has with a patient.

Aim of the Course

The **aim** of initiating a patient navigation program is to create a trained taskforce to facilitate patient's journey right from entry to the Hospital to follow-up and getting back to normalcy; taking care in addition of emotional, economic and various other needs in a holistic way.

Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), in collaboration with Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and with support from **Tata Trusts**, is introducing a **one year (full time) Advanced Diploma in Patient Navigation (KEVAT), for the first time in India**. The course will address the need for a structured patient support system for cancer care that will form a bridge between patients and access to care.

About Patient Navigation

Patient Navigation is a rapidly growing and evolving healthcare profession. The concept evolved from Dr. Harold Freeman's groundbreaking patient navigation study in 1995 and has steadily grown over the past couple of decades. While the need for patient navigation has never been greater, the role of the patient navigator and scope of practice has been ill-defined until now. Patient navigation programs have proliferated quickly with no clear standards.

This Patient Navigation Program - KEVAT is one of the first in India to focus on an emerging patient navigation model that can be applied across all cancer care institutions. The program shall empower the navigators to:

- Understand the emerging patient navigation role and how it applies to various health care and social services settings
- Become knowledgeable about the current health care climate and structure, including transitions of care
- Understand how to communicate effectively with patients and families in a way that maintains dignity, autonomy, and confidentiality
- Learn how to engage with patients and families in meaningful and productive discussion, i.e. – Be able to identify what can be done to improve patient experience and how to reconcile differences between what patients want and what health providers believe is right for them
- Acquire skills to assess patient needs and outcomes, and evaluate your own patient navigation practice
- Understand confidentiality protocols, ethics in care, advanced directives, patient rights, etc.

Key Features

- A first-of- its kind program providing conceptual understanding of the needs of patients and caregivers
- Collaboration with Tata Trusts and TISS
- Mentoring by Specialists in the field of Healthcare
- Observer-ship and Hands-on Experience at Tata Memorial Hospital
- Development of managerial capabilities, soft skills & personality improvement

- Opportunity for Scholarships at International Institutes
- Assistance in Networking for Recruitment
- Skill Lab – Specific practical skill training facilities offering the possibility of integrating theory learning and practical skills through mock demonstrations, role plays, field visits, case studies etc. prior to real life application.

Course Objectives

- Creating a special work force that would effectively address various patient-needs.
- Patient navigators will form an access bridge connecting patient to delivery of care as well as be the mechanism to reduce the burden on medical care professionals.
- They would seamlessly incorporate the principles of both a “thinker” and a “worker” to work towards a non-negotiable goal of patient care.
- Be empowered with requisite information and communication skills to support patient care in complex multistep medical systems
- Perform as counsellors for patients bringing comfort to care
- Be enabled to effectively undertake the administration requirements/challenges for running patient navigation programs at hospitals.

Patient Navigation is a novel concept in Oncology and in Healthcare. There are many research papers and publications that recognize the need and merit of the role of patient navigators co-existing in a system functioning with social workers and psychologists. While a social worker may be expected to learn about the medical aspects while on job, TMC through this course plans on integrating this learning in the course. Hands-on learning will form an essential part of skill development.

This course can induct graduates/post-graduates and equip them with necessary wherewithal (clinical and psycho-social aspects) to work in an oncology set-up.

Career growth and opportunities

There is a pressing need for well-trained patient navigators in onco-care. More so, being a nascent area of speciality in cancer care, the scope of growth and development of navigators in all public and private institutions holds immense potential.

New centres are being created across the country to tackle the quantum of increasing burden of cancer. Tata Memorial Centre is also expanding and prototypes are planned on the lines of hub and spoke models at Vizag, Sangrur, Chandigarh, Varanasi and Guwahati.

New opportunities for growth of patient navigators within the existing and expanding TMC network are also envisaged. Avenues for growth shall also be presented to the patient navigators within the **National Cancer Grid** network for maintaining the uniformity of standards of patient care throughout the country. **Tata Trusts** also plans on developing new cancer centres in the North-East. Patient navigators would play a vital role in managing patient support in these centres right from its inception.