PRO-TECT Study (AFT-39)
Electronic Patient Reporting of Symptoms During Cancer Treatment
Ethan Basch, MD, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center

- Symptoms are common among patients receiving treatment for advance cancers but go undetected or unaddressed up to half the time.
- Routine collection of electronic PROs have shown improvement in several areas of patient health in a large single site study (Basch 2017).
- PRO-TECT is designed to determine if advanced cancer patients at intervention sites have better clinical outcomes (longer survival, fewer ER visits and unplanned hospitalizations, and better quality of life and physical function) than usual care.

Aim 1: Determine whether systematic integration of electronic patient-reported symptoms into cancer care delivery improves meaningful patient-centered outcomes.

Aim 2: Elicit perspectives about benefit-burden tradeoffs for integrating PROs into clinical workflow from different stakeholders.

Aim 3: Identify barriers, facilitators, and strategies used by practices to integrate PROs into clinical workflow.
National cluster randomized controlled trial to determine the value, acceptability, and feasibility of integrating PROs into routine community cancer
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Patient Symptom Guide

What can I do to manage my pain?
Ways to Manage Pain

1. Talk to your cancer care team about pain medications and their side effects.
2. Acupuncture may help relieve pain.
3. Biofeedback is a method used to teach you ways to feel and control the way your body responds to situations.
4. Heat and cold compresses.
5. Hypnosis or meditation.
6. Massage or reflexology (a special type of massage where pressure is applied to reflex points on your feet, hands, or other areas of your body).
7. Relaxation or guided imagery (focusing on images that bring feelings of relaxation).
8. Physical therapy.
9. Light exercise, yoga, tai Chi, Qigong, or tai Jui for pain.
10. Distractions like watching TV, music, or hobbies.

Alerts for worsening symptoms
Patient Symptom Reports at visits
Symptom Management Pathways

Clinician Action

- Improved symptom management
- Reduced symptom burden
- Improved physical function
- Reduced ER/Hospital utilization

Improved patient satisfaction and communication with providers
Increased tolerance/duration of chemotherapy
Improved Survival

TREATMENT PLAN / INTERVENTION
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**Inclusion**
- Age ≥ 21 years
- Metastatic cancer of any type
- Receiving outpatient systemic cancer treatment for non-curative/palliative intent, including chemotherapy, targeted therapy, or immunotherapy
- Enrolled at any point during a course or cycle of treatment
- Understand English, Spanish or Mandarin Chinese

**Exclusion**
- Cognitive deficits
- Currently in a therapeutic clinical trial
- Treated with curative intent
- Receiving hormonal therapy only
- Indolent lymphomas
- Leukemias

**Early Results**
- 52 sites across 25 states randomized.
- 1,096 patients enrolled of planned 1,200.
- 95% compliance for completing weekly PROs.
- ~40% of PROs trigger alerts to clinicians for severe or worsening symptoms.
- Pain (49%) and physical function (45%) were the most common.
- Over half of patients chose to weekly self-report via email (58%) and 42% chose automated calls to phone.
This trial (AFT-39) is funded by an award from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI).

To learn more or to open this trial at your site, e-mail: seriggsb@email.unc.edu