

A Randomized Controlled Trial to Evaluate the Survivorship Needs Assessment Planning Tool for Head and Neck Cancer Survivor-Caregiver Dyads

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Head and neck cancer (HNC) caregivers face significant challenges at the end of treatment as they transition to the home setting and care for survivors with devastating late and long-term treatment effects. The overall goal of this research is to improve post-treatment recovery outcomes in HNC survivors and their caregivers through the delivery of a tablet-based, dyadic survivorship needs assessment planning (SNAP) tool implemented into clinic workflow at the end of treatment. SNAP is a technology-enabled survivorship care planning system that uses a self-management focus to: 1) prepare caregivers as they transition to the next phase of caregiving and 2) optimize healthcare utilization (e.g., receipt of recommended medical and supportive care) in caregiver-survivor dyads.

Our interdisciplinary team is conducting a randomized controlled trial to test the effects of SNAP compared to usual care on caregiver and survivor outcomes (N=176 dyads) and gather crucial data to guide best practices for disseminating the system to diverse HNC care settings in the future. Specific Aim 1 will evaluate the effects of SNAP on caregiver burden in caregivers, symptom severity in survivors and psychological well-being in dyads at 6 months. Specific Aim 2 will evaluate the effects of SNAP on healthcare utilization uptake, unmet needs and self-efficacy in dyads at 3 months. Specific Aim 3 will use mixed methods to characterize key barriers and facilitators to SNAP system adoption in HNC healthcare settings diverse by practice structure, patient volume and rural/urban status using surveys in a national panel of HNC healthcare providers (N=200) and 5 in-depth case study visits with HNC centers in the southeastern United States to guide refinement of SNAP program delivery strategies and tools.

SNAP is novel in its focus on using technology to build a clinic infrastructure to automate care practices to assess, address and support survivorship needs in HNC caregiver-survivor dyads at the end of treatment. SNAP invests in the critical roles played by caregivers through a stepped, dyadic approach to accelerate recovery. Results will provide critical evidence to finalize this sustainable, technology-enabled care planning system for a multi-site implementation study.