

Better outcomes, lower cost in first-ever oncology hospital at home evaluation

May 29 2020

Researchers at Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) at the University of Utah (U of U) presented the first outcomes evaluation of an adult oncology hospital-at-home program today at the 2020 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) annual meeting. The study evaluated patients participating in HCI's Huntsman at Home™. The data demonstrate strong evidence for this care model, showing improved patient outcomes, including reduced hospitalizations and decreased visits to the emergency department.

Huntsman at Home was launched in 2018 as a way to bring HCI-quality care to [cancer patients](#) in their homes. The service combines HCI research and clinical expertise for in-person and remote patient and caregiver support and acute-level clinical treatment. A team of oncology professionals deliver care, following best-practice standards. Currently, Huntsman at Home is available to HCI patients living within a 20-mile radius of the flagship hospital in Salt Lake City.

The lead author of the study is Kathi Mooney, Ph.D., RN, interim senior director of population sciences at HCI and distinguished professor of nursing at the U of U. Mooney and her colleagues evaluated outcomes over 14 months for 367 cancer patients, 169 of whom participated in Huntsman at Home and 198 control patients who qualified for the program, but live outside the service area. Patients with several types of cancer and at various stages of cancer were evaluated. During the first 30 days of enrollment, Huntsman at Home patients were 58% less likely to be admitted for an unplanned hospital stay, and those who were admitted

to the hospital had a shorter length of stay. Huntsman at Home patients had 48% less emergency department visits. They also had 48% lower cumulative charges for clinical services when compared to controls. Results over 90 days were similarly robust.

"These findings strongly support our hypothesis that Huntsman at Home's high-quality, acute-level cancer care using a hospital-at-home model improves outcomes while simultaneously improving value," said Mooney.

Huntsman at Home services range from symptom management to acute medical, post-surgical, and end-of-life care. The Huntsman at Home team is led by HCI nurse practitioners working in conjunction with HCI oncologists and is operated in partnership with Community Nursing Services, a home health and hospice agency that provides registered nurses for the team. Other cancer care specialists such as social workers and physical therapists contribute to patient care. Patients must receive a referral from their oncologist and live within a 20-mile radius of HCI.

Mooney and her colleagues plan to continue evaluating outcomes of [patients](#) participating in this program. They are also working to implement a geographic expansion of Huntsman at Home in late summer 2020, extending care to several Utah rural counties.

The 2020 ASCO Annual meeting was held virtually from May 29 to May 30. As one of the largest clinical [cancer](#) research meetings in the world, ASCO brings together more than 30,000 professionals worldwide for on-demand and scheduled broadcasts of the latest cutting-edge oncology research.

Provided by Huntsman Cancer Institute

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