

# Expanding ThriveNV Patient Navigation with Bilingual Southern Nevada Presence

## BACKGROUND

It's estimated there are more than 141,000 cancer survivors in Nevada, and on average that number increases by 4,000 to 6,000 each year (ACS, 2022). Nevadans affected by cancer – both survivors and their caregivers – need more support following a cancer diagnosis, according to findings from a focus group study conducted by Nevada Cancer Coalition in 2017. In addition to wanting more information, they were looking for more connection to support groups and services, and help navigating the many complexities of cancer care.

NCC's Survivorship Task Force evaluated the results of the focus groups and, among many other recommendations, advised increasing the use of nurse and lay navigators to provide greater support for cancer survivors and their caregivers.

Patient navigation is a community-based service that can promote access to support and services, help eliminate barriers to care, and reduce disparities caused by socioeconomic status, race, or ethnicity. It has been proven effective since the first documented use of it by Dr. Harold Freeman in 1990 (Dixit, et al, 2021).

Some cancer care hospitals in Nevada offer clinical navigation services to people diagnosed with cancer, but too often limited reimbursement and



staffing levels have meant only a small percentage of those being treated, often those who have breast cancer, receive navigation services.

ThriveNV was launched by NCC in 2020 to help fill a gap in Nevada by providing people affected by cancer who would otherwise not have access to navigation services with free non-clinical navigation support provided by trained staff members.

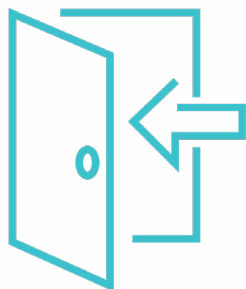
The service is available to anyone, regardless of insurance or immigration status, and is offered in multiple languages – through a translation service and now through two Spanish-speaking navigators. People diagnosed with cancer, or their caregiver, can receive assistance by phone, email or text.

## CHALLENGE:

During the first 18 months, the ThriveNV program was implemented with two English-speaking navigators located in Reno, but it was clear the program wasn't serving the state equally, with few requests for assistance made by people living in southern Nevada and Spanish-speakers.

## OPPORTUNITY:

ThriveNV had a network of resources, a website, and program growth largely by word of mouth and outreach with brochures and virtual presentations. In mid-2021, NCC received a grant focused on reducing health disparities in groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19. The grant included funding to expand the ThriveNV program and improve navigation services to non-English-speaking Nevadans and those living in rural communities. At that same time, one of the Reno navigators moved to another state, providing an opportunity to reconfigure navigation staffing and diversify the program.




## ACTIVITY

In fall 2021, NCC expanded to southern Nevada by hiring a bilingual navigator, then added a second bilingual navigator in March 2022. These two new team members trained as lay navigators using the GW Cancer Institute's Oncology Patient Navigator Training, then joined NCC's Reno-based nurse navigator in completing navigation requests statewide.


In addition to responding to requests, the pair also participate in outreach events throughout the Las Vegas region to increase awareness of ThriveNV and NCC's other programs and activities.

**In the year since ThriveNV has added its two bilingual, southern Nevada navigators the program has seen:**

 **400%**  
increase in  
Spanish-speaking clients

 **41%**  
increase in calls from  
southern Nevada

 **10X**  
southern Nevada  
events attended

 **700%**  
southern Nevada  
people reached in-person

## OUTCOME

Year-over-year the program has seen increases in number of calls from southern Nevada residents and number of calls from Spanish-speakers thanks largely, in part, to the addition of these two southern Nevada navigators. In their first full year on staff, the southern Nevada team navigated more than half – 52 total – patients, caregivers, and others in need of help.

Those working with ThriveNV's southern Nevada navigators reported 61 total barriers to care and wellness including transportation access, food insecurity, housing, insurance, financial issues, no documentation, and a lack of peer support, among others. Through their work, the navigators were able to provide 66 referrals to help these individuals get the care and support they need.

ThriveNV has already begun to expand the reach of its program through outreach to rural and oncology health care providers with information and resources. In late 2022 and into 2023 the program will also be promoted with rural billboards and bilingual radio and video ads.

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Citations:

American Cancer Society (2022). Cancer Treatment and Survivorship Facts and Figures 2022-2024. Accessed at <https://www.cancer.org/research/cancer-facts-statistics/survivor-facts-figures.html>.

Dixit, Niharika, MD; Rugo, Hope, MD, FASCO; Burke, Nancy J., PhD, et.al. (2021). DOI: 10.1200/EDBK\_100026 American Society of Clinical Oncology Educational Book 41 (April 8, 2021) 3-10.

Nevada Cancer Coalition (2017). Cancer Survivor Focus Group Study. Access at [https://www.nevadacancercoalition.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/NVSurvivorFocusGroups\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://www.nevadacancercoalition.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/NVSurvivorFocusGroups_Report_Final.pdf).