



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

Award ID:
PP120188

Project Title:
Lymphedema Services for Underserved Breast Cancer Survivors of Dallas County

Award Mechanism:
Evidence-Based Prevention Programs and Services

Principal Investigator:
Gauthier, Charla D

Entity:
Methodist Dallas Medical Center

Lay Summary:

This project aims to reduce the incidence of lymphedema among underserved breast cancer survivors of Dallas County, as well as provide comprehensive lymphedema therapy to those currently living with the condition. This project has a significant potential to impact our community as this type of survivorship service often goes overlooked and is rarely life threatening. Though not likely fatal, lymphedema decreases the quality of life among hundreds of breast cancer survivors in Dallas County yearly, and can make living with and surviving breast cancer more difficult. We plan to enroll a total of 125 women onto this project, which will be composed of two parts: (1) a screening, measurement and prevention component for breast cancer survivors at risk of developing lymphedema, and (2) a lymphedema therapy component for breast cancer survivors who are currently living with the condition.

All uninsured and underinsured women breast cancer survivors of Dallas County will be eligible to receive screening, measurement and prevention services from our certified breast nurse navigator. This will include pre- and post-treatment arm circumference measurements, education from the navigator and a physical therapist, supportive care items and two (2) sets of compression garments (one to wear/one to wash). Success of this component will be measured by capturing incidence of lymphedema within program participants, and assessment of quality of life by FACT-B surveys. Participation in this part of the program will last 1 year.

Since cost for care is the greatest barrier for many underserved survivors who have lymphedema in our county, this program will cover the entire cost of therapy for women who are uninsured and below 300% of the current poverty level. For women who are underinsured, the program will cover the cost of the co-pays/co-insurances up to a maximum total of \$1293 for women who are below 300% of the currently poverty level. Participation in this part of the program will include physical therapy for up to 12 weeks, compression garments, supportive care items and education. Success of this part of the program will be measured by pre- and post-therapy arm measurements and quality of life surveys. Participation in this part of the program will last 1 year.

Transportation will also be available to women receiving physical therapy, and social work and translation services will be on site to address cultural and language barriers.

The final component of this project is professional training. By the end of this program, two (2) physical therapists will be certified lymphedema specialists.

This will pave the way for Methodist Dallas Medical Center to comply with the guidelines of the National Lymphedema Network, and to continue to serve our community by improving and saving lives through compassionate quality health care.