

Dear AACI Colleague,

We all share a vision of living in a cancer-free world. Through their state-of-the-art research and patient care, members of the Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) are vital components in reaching this goal. Even with 12 million survivors in the United States, however, cancer is expected to overtake heart disease this year as the world's number one killer.

The recent stagnation of public funding for basic research, clinical research and prevention research at our cancer centers is a significant concern, not only for the current efforts of our institutions, but also for future generations of cancer researchers and providers. This is the reason I chose advocacy as my platform when I assumed the role of AACI President in October 2009.

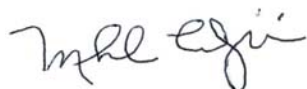
Capturing the attention of public officials and effectively conveying the importance of sufficient cancer research funding has proven challenging. Project Cancer Education (PCE) offers a solution. PCE is a unique, interactive program that aims to educate elected officials and other opinion leaders on important matters regarding cancer care and to give them a greater appreciation for cancer research centers.

PCE was developed at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute to highlight the need for robust public investment in our nation's cancer centers. The program provides an opportunity for policymakers to learn about the complexities of cancer care while experiencing what life is like for a cancer patient, clinician or researcher. Participating in this program deepens their appreciation for the important work cancer centers do to reduce the burden this disease causes in our communities. For more information on PCE, I invite you to view our online video, which can be found at <http://youtube.com/A1XYNEyhT-Y>.

Advocacy begins with each of us. I encourage you to join our advocacy efforts and create a PCE program at your cancer research center. This tool kit provides guidance on how to conduct effective, interactive sessions at your institution.

PCE's purpose is to harness the power of our opinion leaders and elevate cancer research as a funding priority. We hope you will join us in our effort to create a cancer-free world.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Caligiuri, MD
President, Association of American Cancer Institutes
Director, The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center
CEO, James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute
JL Marakas Nationwide Insurance Enterprise Foundation Chair in
Cancer Research



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What is Project Cancer Education?

Overview

Project Cancer Education (PCE) gives elected officials and other community leaders an opportunity to learn about the intricate process of translating medical research into promising new treatments for cancer. The PCE program immerses participants in the lives of clinicians, researchers and cancer patients. Instead of simply inviting opinion leaders to tour a cancer research institution, this unique, “day-in-the-life” role-playing experience gives participants a realistic depiction of a cancer patient’s journey from diagnosis through survivorship.



The PCE program also enables participants to gain a better understanding of the importance of basic research to the success of translational medicine, the financial burdens associated with world-class cancer care, and the role of state and federal governments in providing financial support for translational medicine amid rising costs and continuing cuts in funding. Additionally, the program reveals the benefits of having a cancer research center in the community and demonstrates the vital contributions these institutions make to the global fight against cancer in research, treatment, patient care, prevention, education and community outreach.

This program is not meant to look the same at every cancer center; it should be tailored to each institution. Beyond the central theme of educating participants about the importance of cancer research, PCE offers institutions an opportunity to showcase their own best assets and success stories.

Program Strategy

The PCE program provides cancer research centers across the nation with a way to maximize intellectual, financial and human resources by reaching out to elected officials and other community leaders. The program’s goal is to educate opinion leaders about cancer research centers, their continuous efforts to improve the quality of care nationwide, and their critical importance to advancing cures for cancer.

“This was an insightful, rewarding, and very educational experience. Anyone who is given the opportunity to participate in PCE should do so.”

~PCE Participant

Key Messages for Project Cancer Education

- **Funding: Greater investment in research is crucial to curing cancer.**
Cancer research centers serve an invaluable role in the cancer community. Indeed, basic research is the most important and often the most overlooked component of translational medicine, despite the fact that discoveries at the lab research bench regularly become new treatments at the patient bedside. Cancer research is a complex, collaborative process that requires substantial resources, both intellectual and financial. Because of this, government and private sector support is vital to sustaining the state-of-the-art research and patient care provided by the nation's leading cancer research centers.
- **Uniqueness: Cancer research centers are unlike community hospitals.**
Research and patient care activities at cancer research centers range from etiology (the study of causes of cancer) to prevention, from diagnosis to treatment, and from detection all the way through survivorship. Patients often have options at these institutions that are unavailable to them at community hospitals, particularly access to innovative treatments, including those that may be a patient's best or only chance of survival. The ability to offer such advanced treatments, combined with the availability of more specialized practitioners and technology, truly set cancer research centers apart from other hospitals.
- **Access to cancer research centers: Patients need specialized cancer care.**
Because traditional cancer treatments are not effective for all cancer patients, it is essential that patients have access to the specialized care available at the nation's cancer research centers, including novel treatment options that result from advanced research. To create access, all obstacles to patient access to cancer research centers need to be eliminated.

Desired Outcomes

- **Raising awareness:**
The PCE program aims to educate participants about the importance of cancer research centers and their critical role in reducing the burden of cancer. The program's interactive design offers a way to generate among participants an in-depth understanding of the emotional and physical aspects of cancer.
- **Building relationships:**
Project Cancer Education was developed to gain support from elected officials and other community leaders and to build positive relationships with them. Another central objective is for participants to develop a greater appreciation for cancer research centers and to use this new perspective in shaping public policy and making funding allocation decisions.
- **Marketing your institution:**
PCE can also be an effective way to expand public knowledge of your institution. Participants may share what they learned about your center with their colleagues, friends and families and urge others to visit. Furthermore, after learning of the unique and potentially life-saving aspects of your facility, they will be more apt to choose your hospital should they find themselves or their loved ones in need of cancer care.



Getting Started: How to begin planning Project Cancer Education (PCE) at your institution

Establishing an Implementation Team

It is best to start with an internal steering committee of dedicated individuals from your center. You will want a good mix of departmental members who will:

- understand your center's strengths and shortcomings;
- carefully select a target audience that can champion the strengths of your center and help to close gaps in shortcomings;
- focus the messaging to resonate with the selected audience;
- highlight best practices within your organization;
- tailor the program to address audience knowledge gaps;
- define ways in which participants may help your organization;
- work to achieve your desired outcomes; and,
- coordinate interdepartmentally to ensure the success of the program.

Suggested Participants for Your Implementation Team:

Government affairs department: Identify important elected officials or community leaders and develop targeted messages for an audience of politicians.

Development department: Select important donors who will be receptive to learning more about your facility and assist in the development of private funding messaging to community philanthropists.

Event/outreach department: Coordinate all tactical issues such as scheduling, developing directions for external participants, reserving rooms, ordering refreshments, etc.

Marketing department: Create branding to deliver facts, messages and success stories, and assist in developing collateral materials such as participant briefing materials, message cards, lab notebooks, signage, etc.

Dynamic physicians, nurses and other medical professionals: Serve as PCE presenters and help to develop an engaging story for the program.

Survivors: Present patient testimonials and provide useful insights regarding what participants should see and experience during PCE.

Objectives for Your Implementation Team:

- Develop a program designed to reach your target audience and achieve desired outcomes.
- Highlight your institution's best assets.
- Ensure smooth execution of the event.

Activities for Your Implementation Team

Coordinate:

The story that will be tracked through your PCE program will run across multiple departments. Therefore, it is important to ensure that all participants have a thorough understanding of the story and are aware of their individual roles.

- Arrange a first draft meeting: *This will allow your team to brainstorm, determine individual responsibilities and align expectations for the program.*
- Create a file-sharing site for feedback: *A sharing site will keep everyone on the same page and will allow team members to provide feedback on each other's work as program planning progresses.*
- Schedule individual meetings with presenters (when necessary): *Medical professionals often have very busy schedules, so meeting with them individually will likely be the easiest method of keeping them informed regarding program plans.*
- Carefully coordinate event logistics: *Identify all necessary tasks for program execution and assign individual responsibilities. A sample tactics grid is provided at the end of this section.*
- Organize a dress rehearsal.
- Hold a program debriefing.

Develop the story:

The implementation team should develop a story to be integrated into your PCE program. For instance, you could track the journey of a cancer patient who was successfully treated at your facility. Should you choose a similar approach, work with your marketing department to identify a patient success story that can be recreated and showcased. Consider all the collaboration that went into planning and providing this patient's care and track the development of success from start to finish.

It is important to remember that your program must flow logically. All locations you visit and everything you highlight should enhance the story you are presenting.

- Select your target audience and define your desired outcomes: *Know your audience and strategically focus your message to achieve your desired outcomes.*
- Determine what to highlight: *The implementation team should decide what they want participants to know about your institution when they walk away from this experience. Think about your center's strengths. If you specialize in treating a certain type of cancer, you might track the journey of a patient who is diagnosed with this type of cancer and then successfully treated – perhaps through a procedure for which your institution is well-known. Similarly, consider showing participants impressive technology that is utilized for research at your institution. Lastly, think about how your center provides support for its patients above and beyond basic medical care. For instance, highlight ways in which you offer emotional support to patients, families and caregivers, and explain how you assist patients with financial needs.*

- Select Locations: *The choice of locations in your facility to visit during PCE should largely depend on what you have decided to highlight, but must also be logistically practical. If you decide to showcase several spots in your center, be sure to consider your allotted program time and how much of this time will be required to move from one location to another.*



Prepare program materials:

- Develop separate internal and external agendas (See Page 6).
- Create a script or talking points: *Preparing a script or talking points for presenters will help to ensure that intended messages are delivered and will help to avoid duplication of remarks.*

"I appreciated the rounding experience with the team of doctors and medical students along with the interaction with the patients. It became apparent to me how complex patient care can be. The experience provided a real life perspective to a story that is not always accurately told. I think that the program is excellent, and I hope that I can be involved in its next phase."

~PCE Participant

Be sure to consider audience knowledge gaps when developing this script. Many program participants, such as elected officials, may not be familiar with medical terminology and processes. It is important for presenters to remember that terms should be defined and medical procedures explained.

Finally, in addition to demonstrating your best practices in the PCE program, consider your institution's other success stories and have presenters mention them throughout the program. Work with your marketing department to identify applicable stories.

- Develop participant briefing materials.
- Prepare initial and follow-up questionnaires.


Establish the Tone:

- Engage participants through role-playing: *One major goal of Project Cancer Education is to immerse participants in a realistic cancer research center environment and through role-playing, to evoke the feelings patients and caregivers experience in such an environment.*



- Personalize the Message: *During PCE, participants should **not** feel as though they are simply on a tour of your facility; your institution must find a way to effectively personalize the message. While you can have participants assume roles of doctors and cancer patients and to track the journey of real patient success stories, this is certainly not the only way to deliver the message effectively. For instance, some facilities have assigned all participants to be cancer researchers, giving them a more comprehensive representation of the goals, successes and difficulties faced by these individuals. This decision should be based on your desired outcome.*

Develop an Agenda:

- Determine your program's time frame: *Project Cancer Education can last for any amount of time – a full day, a half-day, or only 2-3 hours. This decision will depend on the availability of your audience and the amount of content you plan to present. If your program will target elected officials, you may only want to plan a program lasting 2-3 hours; these individuals may be short on time, due to other engagements and commitments. You should also consider how far your participants will be traveling to attend the program. A longer distance may require a more robust itinerary.*
- 
- Develop a logical order of activities.
 - Set the amount of time to be spent in each location: *Work with your presenters to determine how long they will need to share information associated with each location and build in some additional time for travel, discussion, or any unexpected issues that may arise. Keep in mind that the program is interactive, so presenters and time frames should be flexible.*
 - Create separate internal and external agendas: *The implementation team should develop two agendas – one for your internal team and the other for program participants. Both should outline the entire event, specifying presenters, time frames, and locations for all portions of the program. The internal agenda should contain all information the presenters need to make the program run as smoothly as possible. This includes the goals for the event, contact information for relevant parties, important talking points and directions specifying when participants should be prompted to pull each message card. Conversely, when developing the external agenda, be mindful of keeping the cancer diagnosis unanticipated.*

Determining Your Budget

- **Seek guidance from state and federal ethics commissions:** *Should your PCE target elected officials, and should you plan to provide travel reimbursement, snacks and/or meals, giveaways, etc., you will need to check with the appropriate ethics governing body. Contact information for the ethics committees of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate are provided below:*



Committee on Standards of Official Conduct
HT-2, The Capitol
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-7103
Fax: (202) 225-7392
<http://ethics.house.gov/>

United States Senate Select Committee on Ethics
220 Hart Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-2981
Fax: (202) 224-7416
<http://ethics.senate.gov/>

If you are inviting state elected officials, you will need to contact the appropriate state ethics governing body to ensure your program plans are consistent with its specific standards.

The following information should be included in your request for certification:

- *An explanation of Project Cancer Education as a privately-funded, educational conference that aims to give participants a first-hand understanding of cancer research and patient care;*
 - *The date and time of the program;*
 - *An invitation list;*
 - *A proposed travel itinerary and program agenda; and,*
 - *A detailed listing of all expenses that will be incurred by your institution such as transportation, lodging, meals, giveaways, etc.*
- **Figure the costs to your institution:** *The necessary budget for PCE is largely arbitrary. The expense to your institution will depend on such factors as how long your program will last, how far your participants will be traveling, what type of refreshments you will provide and whether you will offer any type of souvenirs. However, expenses you will likely incur include the costs of:*
 - *Printing collateral materials, such as participant briefing materials, agendas, message cards, lab notebooks, etc.;*
 - *Transportation and/or parking for participants;*
 - *Obtaining a photographer and/or videographer;*
 - *Project Cancer Education signage;*
 - *Hospital patient wristbands for participants diagnosed with cancer; and,*
 - *White lab coats, which can be reused for subsequent programs.*

Sample Tactics Grid

Activity	Point Person	Target Completion Date	Status
Guest Relations			
Send invitations			
Follow-up			
Develop driving directions and arrival instructions			
Obtain security clearance			
Coordinate transportation			
Secure participant parking			
Provide snacks and beverages for guests			
Program Logistics			
Ensure access to locations by reserving rooms			
Secure availability of presenters and other internal participants			
Develop program agenda			
Produce talking points for presenters			
Develop message cards			
Draft a confidentiality agreement and photography waiver			
Create lab notebooks or other handouts			
Create personalized graduation certificates and name tags for lab coats			
Organize a dress rehearsal			
Ensure audiovisual arrangements for the day of the event			
Secure visuals/signage			
Obtain lab coats, patient wristbands and other props			
Coordinate with the photographer regarding your expectations			
Post-Event			
Send evaluations			
Coordinate a debriefing meeting			
Draft follow-up press releases			

Extending the Invitation

Target Audience

Project Cancer Education (PCE) was originally developed to target elected officials at all levels of government. However, elected officials are certainly not the program's only audience. While not comprehensive, the following list offers some other suggested audiences for PCE:



- Influential political figures and opinion leaders in non-elected positions
- Legislative staffers
- Local advocates
- Private donors
- Health reporters
- Internal board members
- Hospital senior staff

Keep in mind that it is important to strategically link your desired outcome and target audience. Additionally, it may be beneficial to first deliver this program to an internal audience, such as senior staff or board members, to elicit their feedback before sharing with an external audience.

Target Dates

When inviting public officials, staff, and representatives of the Administration to PCE it is beneficial to:

- Schedule the event during session recesses or district work periods;
- Avoid times directly preceding an election; and,
- Offer participants a few date and time options in the initial invitation.

"Project Cancer Education proved to be an excellent way to offer board members another dimension of understanding and education."

~ PCE Participant

Invitation Packet Materials

Examples of the invitation, acceptance letter and initial questionnaire can be found at the end of this section.

- Invitation:
This is the first official communication about PCE potential participants will receive. It should be sent approximately one month prior to the event and give a general overview of the program. The invitation also should contain information on program dates, times, and what the participants should expect to gain as a result of their participation. You may also want to give several options for the date and/or timing of the program, as this may elicit more participation.

Both the invitation and the letter of acceptance should be signed by the director of your center and possibly the director of your government affairs department. It is important for invitees to see a name they recognize. Thus, should you choose to target elected officials, the director of government affairs should either sign the letter or be the person to whom participants respond regarding availability.

- One-page backgrounder on your institution:
Part of the mission of PCE is to have participants learn more about your institution and what value it adds to the local community and the larger cancer care community. This document should be broad and contain general information about your facility, as well as any important discoveries or breakthroughs that have occurred at your institution. Send this document with the initial invitation and, if you want, again with the letter of acceptance.
- Letter of acceptance to PCE:
Once confirmed, participants should receive a letter of acceptance to PCE at your institution. This should be sent approximately 1-2 weeks in advance, reiterate the date and time of the program, and initiate the role-playing nature of the program. The letter should engage the participants and immediately introduce them to the role they will assume during the program. Be aware at your PCE event, however, that your participants are busy people who may not have read their introductory materials. Do not rely on the letter of acceptance to set the stage during the actual PCE.
- Initial questionnaire:
This questionnaire can be labeled as a “pre-employment survey.” It should be sent with the acceptance letter and should capture pertinent information about how cancer has personally affected the participants. This information will be valuable in guiding program planning and assigning participant roles.

You may also choose to include some multiple choice questions about the topics that will be covered during PCE. This will serve as a preview for participants about what they should expect to learn and encounter.

Sample Invitation E-mail

From: Doe, Jane
Sent: (At least one month prior to your PCE event)
To: 'Jones@senate.state.xx.us'
Subject: Invitation to Project Cancer Education

Hello,

Please share with Senator Jones the attached invitation to participate in Project Cancer Education (PCE) at XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center.

This interactive program, designed to educate State opinion leaders on important matters regarding cancer care, will take place on **(insert date here) from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. or 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (your choice of time)**. Transportation to and from the Statehouse will be provided.

Thank you for your time and we hope Senator Jones can join us on *(insert date here)*!

Sincerely,
Jane

Jane Doe
Program Coordinator for Government Affairs
XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center
123 West 10th Avenue
City, XX 12345
Phone: (555) 555-5555

Sample Invitation Letter

(Date- At least one month prior to your PCE event)

The Honorable Mary Jones
Senate Building, 2nd Floor
Capitol City, XX 12345

RE: Invitation to Project Cancer Education

Dear Senator Jones:

The XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center cordially invites you to participate in our Project Cancer Education (PCE) program, designed to educate state opinion leaders on important matters regarding cancer care. This interactive program will take place on **(insert date here) from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. or 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (your choice of time)**. Transportation to and from the Statehouse will be provided.

PCE will provide a hands-on experience in translational medicine – the process of taking research from the lab bench and putting it in the hands of doctors and nurses at the patient’s bedside. Our mission at XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center is to train new doctors, conduct research and care for patients. As the costs of medical education, research and care increase and state and federal funding is cut for these programs, this mission becomes more difficult. The PCE program will highlight the financial burdens associated with providing world-class care and the role government plays in financial support.

Research is both the most important part of translational medicine and also the most overlooked. Project Cancer Education will provide you a full laboratory research experience, allowing you to interact with researchers on all levels. Research leads to discoveries, and discoveries lead to new patient treatments. The XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center is an academic facility in which future researchers and doctors are trained in translational cancer care. Participating in PCE as physician-researchers, you will be sworn in as official medical staff, round with patients, and participate in clinical training exercises. Engaging patients is a vital part of a top-level cancer treatment center.

Quality care is always focused on the patients, beginning and ending with their needs. Knowing a patient’s needs and associating costs and resources with fulfilling those needs is critical to quality care. We would like to give you the opportunity to meet our patients and see the world from their eyes.

By the end of Project Cancer Education, we are certain you will have a better understanding of how our world-class team of physicians, nurses, medical students and researchers collaborate to offer leading-edge cancer care and why this work is crucial in the fight against this devastating disease.

Kindly RSVP by *(date one week before your PCE)* to Jane Doe at (555) 555-5555. We hope you can join us on *(insert date here)*!

Sincerely,

Cancer Center Director
Director, XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center

Government Affairs/Communications Contact
Assistant Vice President for Government Affairs,
XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center

Sample Confirmation E-mail

From: Doe, Jane
Sent: (One Week Prior to PCE)
To: 'Jones@senate.state.xx.us'
Subject: Project Cancer Education

Please see the attachment for an acceptance letter to the Project Cancer Education (PCE) program being held at XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center on *(insert date here)* at 3 p.m.

Transportation to XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center will be provided from the Statehouse 3rd Street entrance at 2:45 p.m. and will return you to the Statehouse following the program. Please plan to arrive on time.

My cell phone number is (555) 555-5555 should you need assistance this coming Thursday.

We look forward to your attendance.

Thank you,
Jane

Jane Doe
Program Coordinator for Government Affairs
XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center
123 West 10th Avenue
City, XX 12345
Phone: (555) 555-5555

Sample Confirmation Letter

(Insert Date Here)

Congratulations!

On behalf of the Admissions Committee, I am pleased to inform you of your acceptance to participate in the Project Cancer Education program at The XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center. This interactive program is designed specifically for you and your fellow opinion leaders.

Your position as a MD/PhD in the Division of Hematology and Oncology at XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center will require you to spend 50 percent of your time dedicated to research and 50 percent of your time dedicated to clinical care. Orientation will begin on *(insert date here)*, at 3:00 p.m. in room 518A. Attached please find background materials on XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center and a current road map to help you locate our facility.

The Admissions Committee has selected you from a large group of well-qualified candidates. In doing so, its members indicate their belief that you will become an even more caring, competent, and exemplary opinion leader. The XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center faculty and administration will do everything possible to ensure that your cancer education is both intellectually productive and enjoyable.

Prior to your orientation, please familiarize yourself with XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center web site and read about the Hematology and Oncology mission (<http://yourcenterswebsite.com>).

This link is a short pre-employment survey. Please take the time to fill it out prior to orientation:
<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22AV947NFQ>

Together, we will make cancer history. Welcome aboard!

If you have questions, please contact John Smith in Development at (555) 555-0000 or Jane Doe in Government Affairs at (555) 555-5555.

Sincerely,

Cancer Center Director
Director, XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center

Government Affairs/Communications Contact
Assistant Vice President for Government Affairs,
XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center

Sample Pre-Screening Survey

Project Cancer Education Participation Survey

Name:

Coat Size

Small Medium Large X Large XX Large

1) Why are you interested in cancer care/research issues? (Please select all that apply)

Personal experience (cancer survivor)

Family experience (caregiver)

Passion for the cause

Other (please explain below)

2) NIH appropriations for cancer research _____ from 1998 to 2003. Since that time, their budgets have been flat.

Increased by half

Doubled

Decreased by 20 percent

Tripled

3) In 1980, the average age at which a researcher in the United States received independent research (R01) funding from the NIH was 39 years old. Between 1980 and 2001, this age _____.

Increased by 1 year

Increased by more than 10 years

Remained consistent at the 1980's average age

Increased by more than 5 years

Decreased by more than 5 years

4) What is the average number of years it takes for cancer drugs to be developed through the pipeline before being made available to patients?

3

5

6.5

10

15

Delivering the Message

Presenters

Knowledgeable, dynamic and enthusiastic presenters are critical to the success of PCE. Presenters do not necessarily need to be individuals occupying specific leadership positions within your organization. You should choose physicians, nurses or medical professionals who:



- Can effectively deliver the intended messages while maintaining the role-playing nature of the program;
- Can speak to participants in understandable terminology, keeping in mind potential audience knowledge gaps;
- Are passionate about their work;
- Can be flexible; and,
- Are knowledgeable about the subject matter.

It is important to assign back-up presenters for each role – since presenters may be called at the last minute to provide patient care, which must be their top priority, and be unable to participate in PCE. The success of your program cannot be dependent on a single presenter.

Suggested Presenters:

- Leadership in your organization: *These individuals are an obvious first choice. Involving leadership in PCE will help establish credibility for the program and in turn lead to buy-in from other faculty. However, these individuals may not be available or may not be able to play the role effectively. In either case, leadership may be able to suggest other faculty members who would be skilled presenters.*
- Dynamic physicians, nurses and other medical professionals: *It is important that presenters are enthusiastic, passionate and able to hold the audience's attention.*
- Medical professionals who have been involved with your institution's best practices: *Look to your marketing department to identify MD/PhDs who have been involved with your institution's best practices or who have been highlighted in interest stories of some sort. Employing such individuals as presenters may also help to establish greater credibility in the minds of PCE participants.*
- Members of your implementation team: *Those involved with program implementation will be the most familiar with the intent of the program, how it should be executed and what messages need to be delivered.*

Objectives of the Presenters:

- Effectively deliver the message: *Presenters should be cognizant of their audience and of the program's intended outcomes and tailor their presentations to these considerations.*
- Speak in understandable terminology and address audience knowledge gaps.

Activities of the Presenters:

- Participate in a dress rehearsal
- First draft meeting: *If presenters are part of your implementation team, they should be involved in planning so they can offer input regarding program content.*

Participants

Not only is it important for presenters to maintain the role-playing nature of PCE; participants must adopt this mindset as well. It is the essence of the PCE experience.

"Project Cancer Education gave me a newfound appreciation for the work of the cancer researcher community. After I learned of the continuous developments in the field, I was filled with faith that one day this heartbreaking disease will actually be eradicated."

~PCE participant



Objectives of the Participants:

- Be receptive to the program messages

Activities of the Participants:

- Assume their roles
- Interact with presenters
- Sign a confidentiality agreement and photography waiver:

Confidentiality of patient medical information is of utmost importance, and you will need to have your participants sign an agreement upholding this standard. A sample confidentiality agreement for PCE participants is available at the end of this section.

To avoid potential legal conflicts, have participants sign a waiver giving your institution consent to use photographs and/or video footage taken during the event. Look to your legal department for assistance in drafting these two documents.

- Provide feedback after participating in PCE.

Supporting Materials

Message cards:

Using message cards helps facilitate the progression of Project Cancer Education. The PCE program allows participants to assume a role, and for this they are prompted at different times in the program to read their message cards, which contain a personal profile outlining their cancer journey or their journey as an MD/PhD.

There should be about 5-7 message cards, and each subsequent card should reveal a little more about the story to participants. Please refer to “Creating Effective Message Cards” in the appendix for information on developing and utilizing message cards.



Internal agenda:

The internal agenda serves as an important resource for presenters during the program. Again, it should include important talking points, a time frame for each portion of the program, and a reminder of when participants should be instructed to pull each message card. Failure to remember this type of information could prevent the program from running smoothly and effectively.

Lab notebooks:



Participant lab notebooks can be a very beneficial tool to organize all participant briefing materials. The notebooks can contain supporting information on program content, presenter biographies, a glossary of applicable terminology, a program agenda and space for participants to take notes and document questions. For additional information, see “Tips for Putting Together a Lab Notebook” in the appendix.

Sample Confidentiality Agreement

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

This is a confidentiality agreement between XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center and _____.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to the following: patient medical information (e.g., treatment, diagnosis, physician name, medical record number, etc.); patient demographic information exchanged under this name; date of birth, address, etc.; insurance and billing information; any information exchanged under this agreement; all documents and reports produced pursuant to this agreement; data produced; and any other confidential information of The XYZ University. Confidential information will not include information given to signee by a patient after obtaining the required consent of the patient.

The signee shall not disclose any confidential information about the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center unless it has the expressed written consent of the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center. The signee shall and shall cause its employees to keep absolutely secret and confidential and not disclose or release to any other person or entity any confidential information. The signee shall add any security provision necessary to protect the confidentiality of information received in any form. In their review of the information collected, the signee agrees to destroy any and all information that may be considered confidential according to this Agreement. If destruction of the information will create a hardship in developing, or editing for the final news story, the signee shall block out the information considered confidential and shall contact the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center for permission to use the blocked information. The confidentiality provisions of this Agreement shall survive any other Agreements between the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center and the signee.

To protect the confidentiality of institution and the patients, all conversations, reports, documents, findings, and technological interactions will be in a patient non-identifiable format. The signee agrees to abide by, and comply with all procedures established by institution to maintain the confidentiality of institution in all interim and final reports. In particular, but without imitation, the signee agrees not to reveal either verbally or in writing, any of the institution or patient results or reports to third parties.

Affirmation Statement

I, _____ (Project Cancer Education participant), understand that the information collected and maintained on patients of XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center is confidential in nature. I agree that all information made available to me will be held confidential and that I will not divulge any information of a patient identifiable nature. Any reports, documents, case studies, or publications resulting from my review of this information will not identify patients.

I have read and agree to abide by this confidentiality agreement.

Signature

Date

Presentation Support

Media Coverage

Photographer:

Due to the interactive nature of Project Cancer Education (PCE), the program provides many great photo opportunities. Have a photographer present throughout the program so pictures can be taken during all portions of PCE. Pictures can be used for marketing purposes, included in press releases or given to participants to commemorate their experience.



Videographer:

You may also consider hiring a videographer to record PCE. You can use the footage to market future PCE programs or to inform internal individuals about the program.

Follow-up press releases:

It is important to communicate to your internal audience what PCE is and what it aims to accomplish. On an external level, press releases can serve as a marketing opportunity for the program. In either case, be sure to include compelling pictures from the event.

Visual Support

PowerPoint presentations:

PowerPoint presentations can serve as useful, supportive tools for presentations but should be used somewhat sparingly during PCE. The program is designed so participants generally do not feel they are on a tour and simply being “talked at.” The majority of the program should have an interactive feel. However, PowerPoint support may be necessary when explaining complex topics or in showcasing a certain area of the hospital or medical procedure that cannot be seen by participants directly. A PowerPoint presentation also may be an effective addition to your introduction/orientation.

Props:

Giving participants the opportunity to see medical equipment they have likely heard about but have never seen can be very effective. It makes the experience seem much more realistic. For instance, if you are discussing bone marrow transplants, showing the needles used to perform this procedure is much more effective than simply providing a verbal description.

Signage:

Work with your marketing department to procure appropriate signage and other visuals for participants to see as they move through the program. You might place these visuals strategically in areas where the group may be held up, such as when waiting for the elevator.

Equipment Price Tags:

Your participants may be surprised to learn the costs of different pieces of lab equipment. Consider labeling each piece of technology with its price and the costs associated with its operation. This will allow participants to get a sense of how much funding is needed to sustain valuable research.

Handouts



Participant briefing materials:

Work with your marketing department to obtain appropriate briefing materials for participants. It is at your discretion how much information you would like to supply, but at the very least provide a handout with details about your institution. You may also choose to distribute presenters' biographies, press releases or further information on specific concepts presented in the program.

Message cards: (See page 37)

Lab notebooks: (See page 39)

Patient wristbands:

Having participants who experience a cancer diagnosis wear patient wristbands may make them feel more like an actual cancer patient.

White coats:

Having participants don a white lab coat is a useful way to get them into the mindset of an MD/PhD. This is also a nice addition to program pictures, and the participants seem to enjoy wearing the coats as well. Include name tags on the white coats to give them a more personalized feel.

Evaluation



Follow-up questionnaire

Send participants a follow-up questionnaire several days after your PCE program. Feedback from participants can be very beneficial, as they can offer an outside perspective regarding the program's strengths and weaknesses. The participants can help determine whether information was presented clearly and effectively, identify improvements that might be made to PCE and convey whether they walked away with a greater understanding of the program's intended messages. Please find a sample questionnaire at the end of this section.

When you send the follow-up questionnaire, include a copy of the agenda along with pictures of the presenter(s) for each program segment. This will serve as a reminder helping participants give more useful feedback.

Program Debriefing

After the program, your implementation team and possibly your presenters should have a meeting to discuss the positive and negative aspects of the program. This will also provide team members with an opportunity to make suggestions for improving future programs. Further, the comments written by participants on their follow-up questionnaires should be shared and taken into consideration.

Sample Evaluation

Project Cancer Education Program Evaluation

- 1) The presenters were successful in achieving the goals and objectives of the program.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 2) The presenters were effective in delivering their respective messages.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 3) The goals and objectives of this program were made clear to me at the beginning.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 4) The presenters were knowledgeable on the topics they presented.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 5) Attending this program was a good use of my time.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 6) The things I learned during this program will have a direct positive impact on my work.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 7) I feel I can speak intelligently about the topics discussed during the program.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 8) I would recommend this program to others.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 9) The program changed my perspective on the role of cancer research and care in our society.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 10) The program helped me understand the role of government and its impact on cancer research and care.
 Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree
- 11) How would you rank the program's ease of access (pre-arrival logistics, communication, etc.)?
 Favorable Unfavorable No opinion
- 12) Were there segments that you found to be especially interesting or useful? If yes, please describe.
- 13) Were there segments that might have been eliminated or modified to enhance your experience?
- 14) Do you have any additional comments?

Suggested Program Tracks: How to Use the Modules to Plan Your Project Cancer Education

This tool kit contains five general modules to guide you through the various portions of your Project Cancer Education (PCE) program. Recommended frameworks are provided for registration, orientation, patient care, research and graduation sections. However, these are only meant to be suggestions, provided as an example of methods that have worked successfully in the past. You are encouraged to do things differently as you see fit. No two PCE programs are meant to be exactly the same.

Program content will differ depending on your institution's decisions about what you want to highlight. This will also dictate which locations of your facility will be showcased during PCE.



Some suggested tracks include:

- Registration
- Orientation
- Patient testimonial(s), possibly from a current faculty or staff member who was treated at your institution
- One or several different basic research laboratories
- A special laboratory specific to your institution
- An area in which participants may be able to see interesting aspects of research, such as patient tissue samples
- An area in which you may demonstrate bench-to-bedside research
- A doctor's office in which patients are informed of their cancer diagnosis
- Patient treatment areas
 - Patient rooms
 - Radiation oncology
 - Chemotherapy
- Financial services department (This may be best included as part of another track.)
- Operating room to observe surgery
- Graduation ceremony

Feel free to use the suggestions provided or develop your own ideas for your PCE program. There are an unlimited number of possibilities.

Suggested Program Tracks

Module 1- Registration

Explanation:

Registration offers participants an opportunity to prepare for the program, meet members of your organization and become acquainted with the concepts of the Project Cancer Education (PCE) program. You should reinforce the interactive nature of the program, but be aware that participants may not have read their introductory materials.

Successful Tactics and Collateral Materials

- Location: *Ideally, participants should begin the program in a venue that will make them feel as though they are attending a new physician orientation, such as an auditorium or a large conference room.*
- Presenters: *Staff members and/or volunteers can assume the role of human resources staffers to greet and help distribute materials to participants. They should speak to participants as if they are new physicians. For instance, a participant named John Smith should be addressed as Dr. Smith.*
- Presentation Support: *The location in which registration and orientation are held will generally have audiovisual capabilities, so you might have a video or slide show about your institution playing in the background as participants enter and prepare for the program.*

Participants should be presented with the materials they will need for the program such as message card packets, PCE lab notebooks, pens from your institution and white lab coats with personalized name tags attached. The white coats should be hanging on a rack in the orientation room. Staffers should offer to take participants' suit coats and hang them on the coat rack.

Additionally, have each participant sign a confidentiality agreement and a photography waiver during registration.

It may also be nice to supply drinks and light snacks for participants to eat before the program begins.

Objectives

- Registration should set the stage for the program and make participants aware of its role-playing nature, but be careful not to give any indication that participants may soon be assuming the role of cancer patients.

Suggested Talking Points

- Welcome: Participants should receive a warm welcome from staffers and presenters and should be congratulated on having been chosen to complete their fellowships at your institution.
- Confidentiality and photography waiver agreements: Be sure to explain to participants that portions of PCE may require their agreement to maintain confidentiality of sensitive medical information under The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Please note that a waiver will also need to be signed by any patient being observed in his/her care setting. It may be best to assign an actor to the role of a patient, rather than raising any potential legal concerns.

Secondly, participants should be informed that by signing the photography waiver, they are granting your institution consent to use any photographs or video footage taken of them during their visit to your institution.

- Message card packets: Participants should be told not to open their message cards until prompted by presenters.

Module 2: Orientation / Introduction

Explanation

Staging a new employee orientation for participants provides a great opportunity to introduce them to your institution, highlight your strengths and successes, and make them excited about the unique features of your center.

Successful Tactics and Collateral Materials

- **Location:** *Orientation should be held in the same location as registration – a venue that will make participants feel as though they are attending a new physician orientation.*
- **Presenters:** *Having hospital leadership welcome participants to the orientation may give the program more credibility. It is important for presenters to speak enthusiastically and passionately about your institution, while still maintaining the role-playing nature of the program. Be sure to reinforce that PCE is an interactive program throughout which they will assume the role of physicians and researchers.*



Orientation may also be a good chance to incorporate a testimonial from a patient who was successfully treated at your institution. It may help to put things into perspective for participants and to give them an indication of the impressive treatments that occur at your facility.

While still in the orientation room, you may choose to begin presenting some program content. Your implementation team should have chosen presenters with sufficient knowledge who can relay the information effectively. These presenters should be referred to as the participants' colleagues.

- **Presentation Support:** *Orientation is an appropriate time to utilize PowerPoint to provide details about your organization's operations and to show pictures of areas of the facility that participants will not see.*

Seek guidance from your human resources department regarding their on-boarding policies and procedures. They may be able to supply useful materials, such as orientation PowerPoint presentations, new employee handbooks or special giveaways.

Orientation is often an appropriate time to explain some of the more complicated concepts in the program, since PowerPoint slides may provide clear explanations of the material.

Objectives

- Participants should feel as though they are actually attending an orientation as MD/PhDs beginning their fellowships at your institution.
- From this presentation, participants should begin to understand how your center is unique. As opposed to being treated at a community hospital, patients in your institution have access to both leading-edge treatments and standardized cancer care.
- The high costs of cancer research should also be conveyed, and the importance of government and private donor support should be highlighted.
- Participants should walk away from their orientation with knowledge of your institution's successes - for instance, patient success stories, treatments developed at your facility and the number of patients treated on a daily basis.

Message Card Suggestions

Although it is entirely your decision what you would like your message cards to say, it is recommended that you have participants pull several cards during this phase of the program in order to keep them engaged. Some suggested content on which message cards can be based are marked with a star-☆.



Suggested Talking Points

- Opening remarks: *Welcome participants to your institution and explain the exciting opportunity they have to contribute the creation of a cancer-free world.*
- Briefly comment on the experience of working with cancer patients: *Have presenters discuss the rewards and challenges of treating cancer patients and explain how your institution provides hope for the patients and their friends and families.*
 - Explain the difficulty of informing patients they have cancer
 - Presenters may also choose to share a personal story
 - Make certain to highlight the message of hope
- Highlight the mission and vision of your organization.
- Provide details about your institution and its operations:
 - Give statistics about your facility – the number of patients seen, the number of beds in your facility, the number of laboratories you have, etc.
 - Explain significant facts about your institution.
 - Highlight any accreditations your institution has received.
 - Emphasize your specializations and provide details on those areas.
 - If applicable, discuss your NCI designation as a Cancer Center or Comprehensive Cancer Center, what it means for your institution and how the designation is attained.
 - If applicable, describe the significance of being an academic-based institution.

- Detail the features of your institution that make it unique:
 - Explain the process of translational research and how clinicians and researchers collaborate to give patients access to leading-edge therapies.
 - Describe how your research and patient care activities range from etiology all the way through to survivorship and include prevention, detection, diagnosis and treatment.
 - Mention that patients at your institution have opportunities not available at a community hospital or oncology center. Be prepared to give examples of these benefits in terms that the participants will quickly understand.
 - Emphasize your institution's approach to effective and compassionate patient care.
- ☆ Explain your shared resources or other impressive technology.
- Detail the distinction between basic and clinical research.
- Highlight significant discoveries that have been made at your institution.
- Explain where your institution procures its research funding.
- ☆ Give an explanation of the process through which a research grant is obtained:
 - Explain all steps of the process, including the initial idea, proposal development, institutional approvals, proposal submission, award negotiations, conducting the research and drafting final reports.
 - You may also wish to describe a specific type of grant, such as an NIH R01.
 - Describe what happens if a grant application is denied.

Additional Recommendations

- Information presented should not be too technical or overly in-depth. You may have a lot of information to cover during this session, but you should try to keep it fairly succinct, as participants may become overwhelmed.
- Incorporate things participants will see throughout the event into your introductory speech so they will have some familiarity with the concepts when visiting these areas.

Module 3: Patient Care / The Diagnosis

Explanation:

During this module, half of the group will assume the role of “patients”, while the other participants retain the role of “MD/PhDs” and attempt to develop new treatments for their colleagues’ ailments.

Once participants pull their cards and discover they have cancer, they should be briefed on their treatment options and any additional assistance your institution offers to its patients. Conversely, participants who have not been diagnosed should be informed that they will be performing research on the type of cancer with which their new colleagues have been diagnosed.



Successful Tactics and Collateral Materials:

- **Location(s):** *This section of the program can be held in several different locations, depending on availability and what you would like to showcase. Some suggestions are a patient treatment room, private chemotherapy room, radiation oncology unit, operating room, or possibly an office where patients go to discuss their options with an oncologist, social worker or other patient advocate.*
- **Presenters:** *Your presenters for the patient care portion(s) should be knowledgeable about the treatment procedures to be discussed. They should be able to speak to participants in laymen’s terms while still effectively describing the procedures and what they are meant to achieve.*
 - This is an appropriate time for participants to learn about your institution’s support programs and policies. For instance, you may have someone from your financial services department speak to participants about how they can help the newly diagnosed patients manage the financial aspects of cancer care.
 - Remember to have presenters speak to participants as they move from one area of the facility to the next. Ideally, this should be someone who works on the floor to which participants are headed, so he/she may inform them of the functions of the floor.
- **Presentation Support:** *During the patient care section, you may want to use props. In some locations, such as an ordinary patient room, there may not be much for participants to see. You may choose to show actual patient scans or items that are used in medical procedures, such as bone marrow biopsy needles. You may also decide to distribute pathology reports to the “patients” showing their test results. If you feel that PowerPoint support is necessary to effectively explain a concept, you may have participants visit a room or office in which such equipment is available. If this is not a viable option, you could provide participants with printouts of the PowerPoint slides.*

Objectives



- Participants will experience a portion of what a real cancer patient must endure. Participants should gain an understanding of the difficult choices that cancer patients face on a daily basis.
- Participants will gain knowledge about the high costs of cancer care, the significant challenges patients face when trying to pay their medical bills and how your institution provides financial assistance to its patients.
- Participants should learn about the importance of clinical trials, reinforcing to participants the value of clinical research.

Suggested Talking Points

- Notification of diagnosis:
 - Explain to participants that the results of their pre-employment health screenings have been reviewed, and some significant concerns have been identified in some of the results. At this time, participants should be prompted to pull the card informing them of their own or their colleague's cancer diagnosis. ☆
 - Provide a description of the patient's cancer. Information presented should not be overly technical or too in-depth. ☆
 - Presenters should tell "patients" that they have been put on temporary leave. At this time, instruct the "patients" to remove their white coats and give each a patient wristband to wear.
 - Presenters may want to convey a message of hope consistent with your institution's messaging to patients.
- Explanation of Treatment Options:
 - Describe traditional cancer treatments, such as chemotherapy and radiation, and explain how the treatments combat cancer. Presenters should provide metaphors that will help simplify their explanations.
 - Talk about specific treatment options for the type of cancer you have chosen to highlight. ☆
 - Provide details about your institution and highlight your specialties in treatment and patient care. For instance, you might provide statistics on the number of patients who have received a certain treatment in your center and provide comparison statistics of nearby facilities.

- Give an explanation of clinical trials. ☆ Following is a list of topics you might include in your discussion:
 - Outline the questions that are addressed in a clinical research protocol.
 - Describe the benefits of clinical trials.
 - Explain the different phases of clinical trials and the FDA approval process.
 - Give examples of patients who have successfully been treated in clinical trials.
 - Address the common misconception that some clinical trial participants do not receive any type of cancer treatment.
 - Possible fact to include: While 80-90 percent of children with cancer are treated in a clinical trial, less than five percent of adult cancer patients participate in clinical trials.

- Overview of Other Patient Considerations and Assistance Available at Your Institution:

- Describe the financial struggles faced by cancer patients and explain to “patients” how your financial services department will help them navigate this challenging process. ☆



- Give an indication of the total cost of cancer treatment, including the cost of prescription medications, and note the prevalence of health care-related bankruptcies.

- Explain common insurance concerns, and give an example of an insured cancer patient’s cost-sharing responsibility.
- Emphasize your institution’s approach to effective and compassionate patient care.
- Mention all support services offered by your institution, such as counseling, social workers, support groups and financial services.

Message Card Suggestions

You will definitely want to have a message card that surprises participants with a cancer diagnosis. “Patient” cards may include a short explanation of symptoms and a description of the cancer with which they have been diagnosed. The corresponding card pulled by the “MD/PhDs” should inform them of their colleagues’ diagnoses and also give an explanation of the specific type of cancer.

Module 4: Research

Explanation

This module should inform participants about the process of translational research and demonstrate its importance. This section of the program also provides an opportunity to showcase your institution's research successes and to inform participants of the significant need for research funding.



Successful Tactics and Collateral Materials

- **Location(s):** *Participants should visit a laboratory or other research area – a basic research laboratory or a special laboratory affiliated with research specific to your institution. Or, you may choose a location in which you can demonstrate the results of “bench-to-bedside” research.*
- **Presenters:** *Your presenters for this portion of the program should be knowledgeable about the research process, the technology and both the clinical and research operations of the particular area. They should be able to speak to participants in laymen’s terms.*

Again, remember to have a presenter explain the functions of each floor as participants are traveling between locations. Ideally, this should be someone who works on the floor to which you are headed, so he/she can effectively describe the operations that take place in that area.

- **Presentation Support:** *If you visit a laboratory, be prepared to show and explain the materials used during research. For instance, if you visit a basic research laboratory, you may have participants look into microscopes or observe the animals with which you are working. Be sure to coordinate with the research lab to ensure that the space is clean and neat before your visit.*



Additionally, when visiting any research area, explain the technology used to support the research. Notify participants of the cost of technology, possibly by labeling the various machines with price tags, and explain why the technology is worth the cost.

Lastly, to create the sense of reality, have the normal staff working in the lab while participants are visiting.

Objectives:

- Participants should gain a greater appreciation for cancer research and learn that a significant amount of funding is necessary to sustain the state-of-the-art research that is currently being conducted at the nation's cancer centers.
- The uniqueness of cancer research centers should be conveyed. Patients in these facilities have access to leading-edge treatments not available at a community hospital.

Suggested Talking Points:

- Highlight the value of the state-of-the-art cancer research that is conducted at your facility. Make sure participants are aware that without the discoveries that come from research, we could not have the advances in care that increase survivorship and create cures.
- The difference between basic research and clinical research should be detailed. Provide facts about your center's work in both areas.
- Give an explanation of translational research and why it is often referred to as "bench-to-bedside" research. Also, inform participants that translational research is often a collaborative and intricate process.
- Discuss the impacts of federal investment on research and patient care. For instance, you may mention that NIH appropriations for cancer research have remained flat or declined since 2003. This has the potential to affect not only experienced researchers but also young investigators who may abandon the field. ☆
- Explain that the entire process of developing a new cancer treatment can be very lengthy. For instance, it takes an average of 15 years after discovery for a drug to be made available to patients. ☆
- Be sure to highlight impressive technology and give real-life examples of what the technology does. ☆
- Inform "patients" that their treatments were successful and their cancer is in remission. ☆



Message Card Suggestions:

The research portions of your PCE program can provide many good ideas for message cards, especially for the MD/PhD participants. The cards can help track the researchers' progress toward finding a cure for their colleagues' cancer. However, you should also include some setbacks on their journey.

Module 5: Graduation

Explanation

At the conclusion of the program, it is nice to hold a short graduation ceremony in which all participants are presented with a Project Cancer Education graduation certificate. This offers an opportunity to effectively wrap up the experience and recognize participants for their involvement in PCE.

Successful Tactics and Collateral Materials

- **Location:** *The setting for the graduation ceremony is largely arbitrary, but it may be best to return to the orientation location, as participants may have left their belongings in this area. It is helpful if this room has a small stage and a podium to make the ceremony feel more official.*
- **Presenters:** *You can choose any of your presenters to distribute the graduation certificates, or this can be done by a member of your implementation team who was instrumental in the program planning. If elected officials are in attendance, you may want to have someone with whom they are familiar distribute the certificates, such as the director of your government affairs department.*
- **Presentation Support:** *As “patients” have been informed that their diseases are in remission, their lab coats should be returned to them and their patient wristbands removed. (You will want to have scissors on hand.)*

Graduation certificates should include the participant’s name, the date of the PCE program, the institution, and the signatures of the director of your center and any other individual you choose. A graduation certificate template can be found in the “Blank Templates” section of the Appendix.

The graduation ceremony is a great photo opportunity. Participants should all be wearing their white lab coats, and pictures should be taken as each receives his/her certificate. Additionally, after all participants have received their graduation certificates, take a group photo of the “new graduates” and the PCE presenters.

Objectives:

Like any other graduation ceremony, this should give participants a feeling of accomplishment. The ceremony also serves to formally recognize those who participated in Project Cancer Education.



Central Questions to Answer Before You Begin Planning

Who is our targeted audience?

What are our desired outcomes from PCE?

What are the audience knowledge gaps surrounding our program content?

What would we like to highlight about our institution?

Whom shall we use as presenters?

Is there a patient success story from our institution that we could track throughout PCE?

Do we want to have some or all of our participants experience a cancer diagnosis?

What type of cancer should participants experience?

What parts of our facility will participants see?

Should we have participants split into several groups and have different programs prepared for each group?

What do we want participants to know as they leave PCE?

How long should our PCE program last?

Tips for Creating Effective Message Cards



Message cards are an integral part of Project Cancer Education. They are supportive materials, serving to facilitate the progression of the story tracked throughout the program. However, message cards are not the only option; you are free to devise another way to have the story unfold for your participants. Whether you decide to use message cards or not, you may find the following suggestions helpful when planning your PCE.

Please note: Sample PCE Message Cards are provided in this tool kit.

Purpose of Message Cards:

- Each participant's message cards contain a personal profile, outlining his/her journey as a cancer patient or MD/PhD. Participants are prompted at various times throughout the program to read their message cards, and each card builds on the subsequent one, revealing a little more of the story to participants. The message cards should be cohesive and help facilitate the story's progression.
- The message cards serve an important purpose, and they should be strategically built into your program agenda. Some of the cards may correspond with what participants will actually be experiencing at a particular time, while others, such as the cancer diagnosis card, will be unexpected.

Designing the Message Cards:

- Cards should be visually appealing, including appropriate pictures to avoid making them too text-heavy.
- Print the cards on card stock or have them laminated, especially if you plan to reuse them. You may choose to make adjustments to message cards for different PCE programs due to different target audiences, or simply because you feel that improvements need to be made. Thus, you may not want to spend too much money creating your message cards.
- The message to participants regarding what happens in their journey as a patient or MD/PhD should be placed at the top of the card. Below that, provide some useful facts corresponding to the message or explaining what the message implies. You could also include some facts or highlights about your institution.
- At the beginning of PCE, message cards should be given to participants in a sealed envelope labeled with the participant's name and marked as confidential. Participants should be directed not to look at the cards until the presenters prompt them to pull each one, enabling the element of surprise. Cards should be placed in the envelope face-down and should have numbers on the back to ensure that the correct card is pulled at the correct time. Thus, when participants first open the envelopes, they should see the back of card #1.

Message Card Content:

- Content chosen for message cards should describe real experiences faced by cancer patients, researchers and practitioners. The real-world aspect of the cards should be cited by presenters.
- Message cards should highlight positive aspects of your institution, so what they say will depend on the story you intend to track through your PCE program.
- There should be approximately five to seven message cards per participant, and all participants should receive the same number. Create at least two different sets of message cards – one for patients and one for MD/PhDs. Additionally, the stories conveyed on the two sets of cards should be intertwined.
- You may create additional sets of cards if you would like some participants' stories to take a different turn. For instance, you may have only half of the MD/PhDs have their proposal for NIH funding approved. Similarly, you may have two pieces of research technology that you would like to highlight. Thus, some participants would have a card about one piece of technology, and the card provided to the others would describe the other piece of technology. If you do this, try to start discussion based on the differences in the cards. Encourage participants to ask questions about the implications of the information on the cards.
- Below are several ideas for message card content:
 - Welcome to your institution, including an overview of the benefits of working in your cancer research center as an MD/PhD
 - Research grant proposal (accepted or rejected)
 - Cancer diagnosis explanation (participant or coworker)
 - The MD/PhDs' development of clinical trials
 - The patient's decision on whether to participate in a clinical trial
 - The process of translational research
 - Explanation of treatment options (standard or specialized)
 - The impacts of governmental policies and decisions on research and patient care
 - Insurance conflicts faced by patients (e.g., Your institution is an out-of-network provider)
 - Patients' struggles associated with paying for care
 - Explanation of specific technology at your institution (e.g., shared resources)
 - Survivorship
 - MD/PhDs having their research published
 - A treatment developed by the participant coming to market

Message Card Example:

Several sample message cards are included in the Appendix. In the sample cards, all participants begin as "MD/PhDs," and then some participants experience a cancer diagnosis. Both groups must endure setbacks and make difficult decisions. The goal is for participants to gain a greater appreciation of these challenges. The "MD/PhD" and "patient" stories can be intertwined so in the end, the "MD/PhDs" successfully get our "patients" to remission.

Tips for Creating a Lab Notebook

There are numerous advantages to creating lab notebooks for participants to carry with them throughout the program. They can make participants feel more like actual MD/PhDs, allowing them to take notes and formulate questions throughout the presentations.

Additionally, a lab notebook can serve as an effective organizational tool for participant briefing materials. It allows you to give participants a single book containing all the information they will need throughout PCE, as well as additional information you would like for them to take away from the program.

The following is a list of suggested materials to include in participant lab notebooks. It is in no way comprehensive.

- Welcome letter
- Briefing materials on your institution
- Program agenda (Make sure not to give away the program's surprise twist.)
- Presenter biographies (These should **not** be CVs.)
- Supporting information on concepts presented
- Published articles on your institution's success stories
- Glossary of applicable cancer terminology
- Contact information for the government affairs department and any other individuals who would like to be included
- Additional pages for notes and questions

If you use lab notebooks, the envelope containing the message cards may be included as part of the notebook.

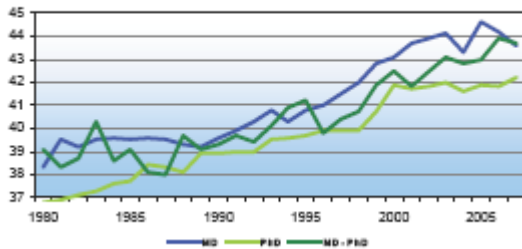
Lab notebooks are a valuable addition to PCE, but they can add a substantial expense. It is up to you whether you feel that lab notebooks are a necessary addition to your PCE and if so, how you would like them to be designed and created.



(Patient Card)

We regret to inform you that your National Institutes of Health (NIH) research proposal to develop novel therapies for acute lymphoblastic leukemia has been rejected. You may resubmit this proposal or a modified version of this proposal for next year's round of funding.

AVERAGE AGE OF FIRST-TIME R01-EQUIVALENT PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS



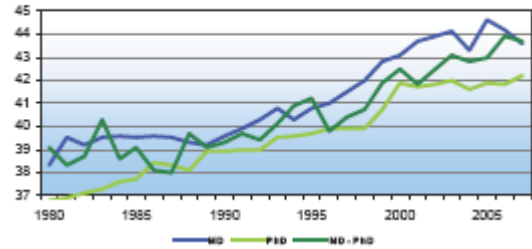
Since 1980, the average age at which a researcher receives his or her first major NIH grant has increased by more than five years. The NIH has developed the Pathway to Independence Award and the NIH Director's New Innovator Award to help fund new and early-stage investigators. While start-up funds given by universities to new researchers and small grants from the NIH and National Science Foundation (NSF) are important funding tools for young investigators, R01s and similar grants are the backbone of groundbreaking scientific research.



(MD/PhD Card)

Congratulations! It is my great pleasure to inform you that you have received the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director's New Innovator Award for your proposal to develop novel therapies for acute lymphoblastic leukemia. You will receive \$250,000 per year for the next five years.

AVERAGE AGE OF FIRST-TIME R01-EQUIVALENT PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS



Since 1980, the average age at which a researcher receives his or her first major NIH grant has increased by more than five years. The NIH has developed the Pathway to Independence Award and the NIH Director's New Innovator Award to help fund new and early-stage investigators. While start-up funds given by universities to new researchers and small grants from the NIH and National Science Foundation (NSF) are important funding tools for young investigators, R01s and similar grants are the backbone of groundbreaking scientific research.

(Patient Card)

You and your family are completely stunned when *you* are diagnosed with cancer.



You have never had any health concerns, but while on vacation prior to beginning this position at the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center, your family noticed that you were short of breath, looked pale and were too tired to do much of anything. You attributed these symptoms to stress and changing jobs. But today, you learn that you have been diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), a fast-growing cancer of the white blood cells. Lymphocytes are a type of white blood cell that the body uses to fight infections. In ALL, the bone marrow makes lots of unformed cells called blasts that normally would develop into lymphocytes. However, the blasts are abnormal. They do not develop and cannot fight infections. The number of abnormal cells (or leukemia cells) grows quickly. They crowd out the normal red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets the body needs. ALL is an acute disease that can get worse quickly. There are about 4,000 new cases of ALL in the United States each year. It appears most often in children younger than age 10 – ALL is the most common leukemia in children. However, it can appear in people of any age; about one-third of cases are found in adults. Your doctor recommended you look into a clinical trial for ALL that is starting soon. You have decided to discuss a trial with your family as a potential treatment plan.

(Patient Card)

Your oncologist at the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center recommends a stem cell transplant as your best, and perhaps only, chance for survival. After extensive testing, your brother is found to be good match for the transplant. You and your brother can undergo this procedure or you can use your own stem cells. Additionally, your oncologist agrees to run a few personalized tests to see if you are an ideal candidate for the acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) clinical trial.



(Insert information on your cancer center's programs and treatment options here)

(Patient Card)

You face hurdles when your spouse's insurance, under which you are currently covered, determines that the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center is an out-of-network provider.



You will be required to travel to a facility in Maryland (a preferred provider) for treatment instead of receiving your care locally.

You opt to stay with the XYZ Comprehensive Cancer Center, but this will require your family to pay outright.

(MD/PhD Card)

You run a test to see if your colleague would respond to your clinical trial. The DNA Microarray division of Shared Resources can help make this determination.

Cancer cells are simply a collection of cells that don't stop growing, so they have our genetic code within them, just like a normal cell. You take a sample of your colleague's leukemia cells and purify the DNA. The DNA microarray machine breaks down that DNA into a genetic fingerprint, which is then printed onto a chip.

The \$800 analysis is run on \$1.5 million worth of lab equipment. Once you've run the analysis, you will have very specific genetic information on that patient, and can start to answer questions about the potential effectiveness of the clinical trial.

Your analysis will take about 10 hours – it took weeks or months prior to having this technology. The analysis will determine whether your co-worker is responding to treatment. It also helps us to develop new treatments targeting the genes – and their associated cells and proteins – that are the cause of those cancers. It really allows us to reach our goal of personalizing medicine.



Test results: The patient has genetic markers that indicate he will likely respond well to the clinical trial.

Acknowledgements

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Rebecca Sustersic, Program Support
Jennifer Hart, Program Support

**For more information about Project Cancer Education,
contact AACI at 412-647-6111 or info@aacI-cancer.org.**