Re-imagining Metastatic Breast Cancer Care Delivery: A Patient-Partnered Qualitative Investigation

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BACKGROUND
Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC) Survivorship Care
- There remains substantial fragmentation of care and lack of focused attention on MBC survivorship care.

Objective
- To assess how people living with MBC would re-imagine cancer care delivery

STUDY DESIGN
- Sampled participants (n = 36) from members of Project Life, an MBC-survivor led patient wellness community.
- Conducted semi-structured, virtual, open-ended interviews covering:
  - Experiences at diagnosis with MBC
  - Experiences of treatment for MBC
  - Experiences of Covid-19 during treatment
  - Re-imagining(s) of MBC care
- Systematically analyzed interview data using Phronetic Iterative Analysis
  - Descriptive followed by synthetic coding and thematic sorting

KEY FINDINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Distribution (n=36)</th>
<th>Race (n=36)</th>
<th>Length with MBC (n=36)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-45: 36%</td>
<td>Women of Color: 22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-59: 22%</td>
<td>White Women: 78%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+: 42%</td>
<td>≥5 years: 58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 5 years: 39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unknown: 3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Organized referral processes for non-oncology care like mental health services, sexual health care, and palliative care
2) The need for MBC-specific support services within the care setting
3) Patient connection to psychosocial aspects of care including social work and patient navigation
4) Streamlined processes for identifying and enrolling in clinical trials

DISCUSSION
- When asked how they would reimagine MBC care delivery, participants overwhelmingly endorsed the need for more care coordination along several key domains including:
  - Non-oncology referral processes
  - Social supports
  - Psychological supports
  - Clinical trial enrollment

IMPLICATIONS
- Responses highlighted the unique needs of care coordination specific to MBC patients. Future care innovations should center patient voices to ensure optimal impact.

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STAY IN TOUCH
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I have been trying for almost five years to get my cancer center to start an MBC support group, and they won’t do it even though the cancer center and other breast cancer patients don’t want us in their early-stage support groups because MBC and MBC patients frighten them. –Quotation from Participant