

2019 RESEARCH UPDATE

STUDY TITLE: THE EVALUATION OF A WORK INTERVENTION TO FACILITATE WORK MAINTENANCE OR RE-ENTRY TO THE WORKFORCE FOR BREAST CANCER PATIENTS



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Financial toxicity – that is, the personal financial problems that are often a result of cancer treatment in cancer patients – has been linked to poorer overall outcomes and increased instances of mortality.

This study, supported by the **Judith A. Lese Breast Cancer Foundation**, explores the feasibility and impact of an occupational therapy work intervention for early-stage breast cancer patients undergoing curative intent chemotherapy. Dr. Yung anticipates that, through services directed at supporting employment issues specific to cancer patients – like maintaining or returning to work following treatment – financial toxicity has the potential to be alleviated, thereby improving patient outcomes.

The trial, which was met with tremendous interest from providers and patients, opened in November 2018 and aims to recruit 30 patients over the course of the 12-month study. Two patients have already completed all study procedures and patient accrual is expected to be easily met.

Next Steps

Based on the pilot data generated from this study, Dr. Yung expects to refine methodologies and may

consider a randomized control trial either within our institution or within a cooperative group format, such as The Southwest Oncology Group, SWOG.

Summary

This important study has enormous potential to improve outcomes for breast cancer patients. As occupational therapy is already a funded treatment under most insurance plans, and generally accepted by the patient population for addressing other concerns, we expect an easy adoption of this work-specific occupational therapy intervention.