

Patient Education for Newly Diagnosed Breast Cancer Patients at the OSU Stefanie Spielman Comprehensive Breast Center



Loomer Doo, Jennifer Prete, Jeffrey Schord

Needs Assessment Summary

At the Stefanie Spielman Comprehensive Breast Center, breast cancer is treated all inclusively in one building. The target population in this study is newly diagnosed breast cancer patients who require chemotherapy, but have not yet been to their first infusion. This class seeks to alleviate some of the anxiety of chemotherapy by increasing understanding of the disease. Information retention in groups receiving education is higher with respect to reporting and management of typical side effects when compared to groups not receiving education. Additionally, patients receiving the education were better able to manage side effects of fatigue, anxiety, and sleep disorders. Over time, the women who had received chemotherapy education were shown to have less anxiety throughout their entire treatment journey.

A trained nurse gives the new patient an overview of their type of breast cancer and the physiology of chemotherapy. The actual emotional process of undergoing chemotherapy is not addressed at this time. This left many patients with lots of anxiety over and fear of treatment. Through direct observations during preceptorships, key informants working at the breast center, and secondary data analysis of previous chemotherapy education classes, it was evident that this education was needed at the Stefanie Spielman Comprehensive Breast Center.

The class educated patients on the realities of chemotherapy, while easing fears and concerns of the patients to allow smoother and hopefully more successful treatment. In addition to explaining chemotherapy basics, the class discusses side effects, risks, precautions, as well as providing community and support. Staff and patient feedback as well as published literature helped determine this class was necessary. Services at the breast center include nutritional counseling and psychosocial services for the patient and the patient's family. Furthermore, they offer survivorship classes, as well as exercise classes such as yoga, and even music therapy and creative arts. The chemotherapy educational class was a missing piece in the overall breast cancer healthcare model.

In order to implement the questionnaires as easily as possible, we prepared an organized packet that was easy to follow with step-by-step instructions. The packet contained two separate surveys that were to be handed out by chemotherapy class nurses. One was given out at the beginning (set A) and one at the end of the chemotherapy class (set B) to assess demographics, anxiety, and patient education. To ensure that all chemotherapy class nurses understood the assessment, a meeting was organized where all were educated on the program and the goals that we wished to accomplish. Furthermore, all questions were addressed and answered. For nurses that could not attend, the meeting was recorded and podcasted on the Stefanie Spielman Breast Center's Breast Channel. At the end of every month, the head clinical nurse for this project, Amy Rettig, collected the surveys and the data was tabulated.

Program Development/Planning

Purpose: To educate patients on the realities of chemotherapy, while easing the fears and concerns of the patients to allow for a smoother and more successful treatment at the Stefanie Spielman Breast Center (SSBC).

Goal 1: Educate newly diagnosed breast cancer patients requiring chemotherapy about the process of treatment at the SSBC, provide information about the medications used and their side effects, and introduce the facilities and available resources.

Goal 2: Collect both objective and subjective data from patients comparing the degree of knowledge retention and level of anxiety before and after the chemotherapy education class.

Program Development/Planning continued

Objectives

- Newly diagnosed breast cancer patients who require chemotherapy that are seen between April-May 2013 will schedule an appointment for a chemotherapy education session at the Stefanie Spielman Breast Center (SSBC).
- 70% of these breast cancer patients will attend their scheduled chemotherapy education sessions at the SSBC.
- Our group will create an evaluation survey that can determine the effectiveness of the chemotherapy education session.
- Patients will answer the evaluation survey questions before and after attending the chemotherapy education class.
- Patients will learn and ask questions throughout the chemotherapy education session.
- Patients who cannot attend their scheduled sessions will explain the reason for their absence.

Program Development and Design

With help and input from clinical nurse practitioner, Amy Rettig, and oncology pharmacist, Michael Berger, we identified the need for more extensive chemotherapy education in SSBC as well as a method to evaluate the effectiveness of these education sessions. After some literary research, our group created a two-part evaluation survey that was developed to compare the level of anxiety and the degree of knowledge before and after a chemotherapy education session. In order to implement the program, pamphlets were created and placed inside exam rooms to remind doctors and nurses to encourage patients to attend these education classes. Patients were scheduled for one-hour education sessions throughout April to May 2013. Then scheduled patients attended a chemotherapy education class at SSBC that consisted of a powerpoint presentation and a tour of the chemotherapy facilities. Evaluation surveys were handed out before and after the powerpoint presentation. After collecting data, results were analyzed to determine if additional revision is necessary and if our goals were met.

Program Implementation

In order to implement the questionnaires as easily as possible, we prepared an organized packet that was easy to follow with step-by-step instructions. The packet contained two separate surveys that were to be handed out by chemotherapy class nurses. One was given out at the beginning (set A) and one at the end of the chemotherapy class (set B) to assess demographics, anxiety, and patient education. To ensure that all chemotherapy class nurses understood the assessment, a meeting was organized where all were educated on the program and the goals that we wished to accomplish. Furthermore, all questions were addressed and answered. For nurses that could not attend, the meeting was recorded and podcasted on the Stefanie Spielman Breast Center's Breast Channel. At the end of every month, the head clinical nurse for this project, Amy Rettig, collected the surveys and the data were tabulated.

Challenges encountered:

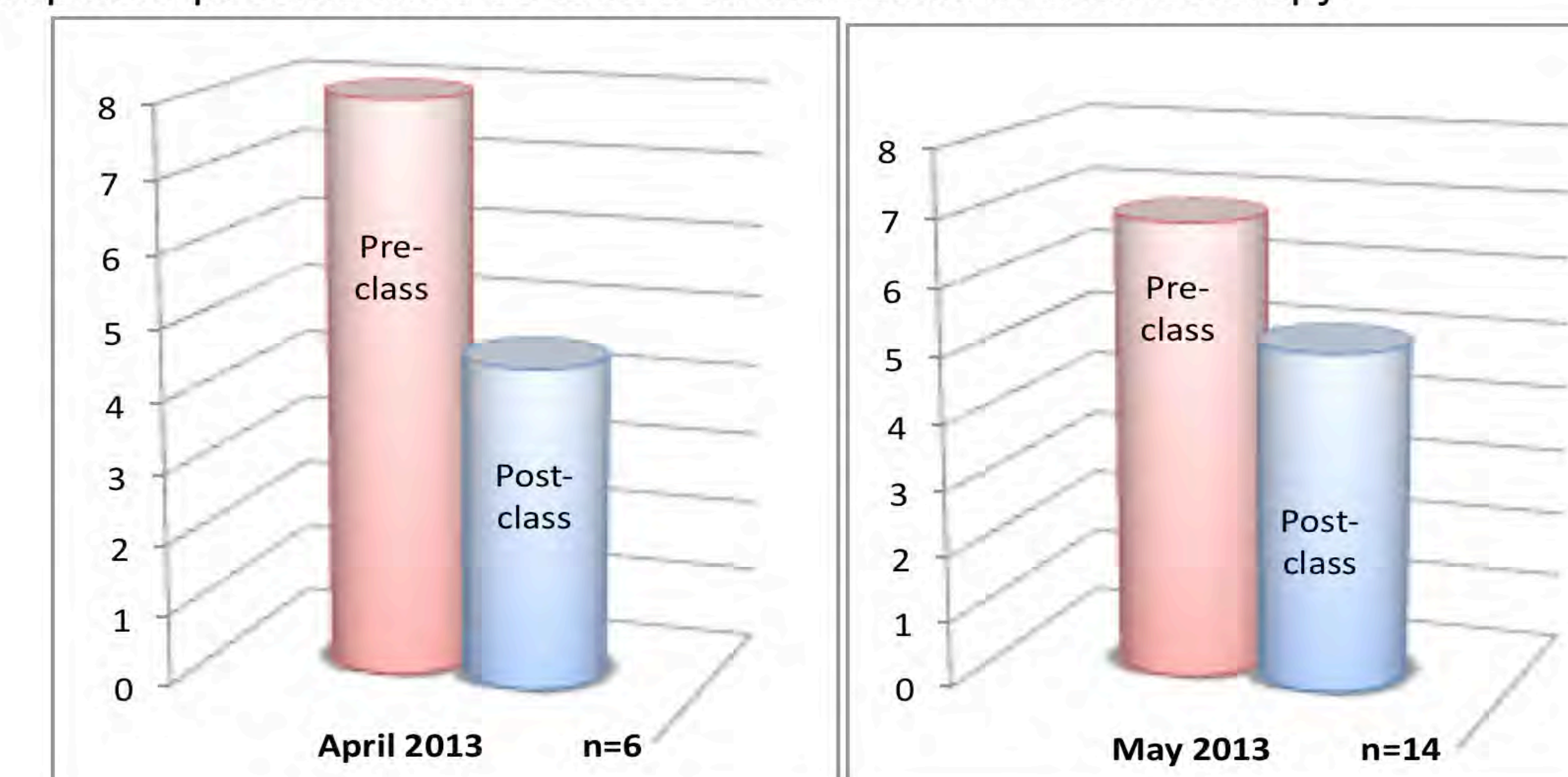
- **Nursing instructors forgetting to hand out the survey**
What was done: Emailed all nurses to clarify when to give out the survey
- **Low attendance**
What was done:
 - 1) Spoke to physicians about the benefits of the class and encouraged them to continue to refer patients.
 - 2) Confirmed pamphlets were present in all patient exam rooms

Program Evaluation

From April 2013 to May 2013, 22 cancer patients, in total, completed the surveys and attended the chemotherapy education. The survey data were then collected and analyzed.

Anxiety level

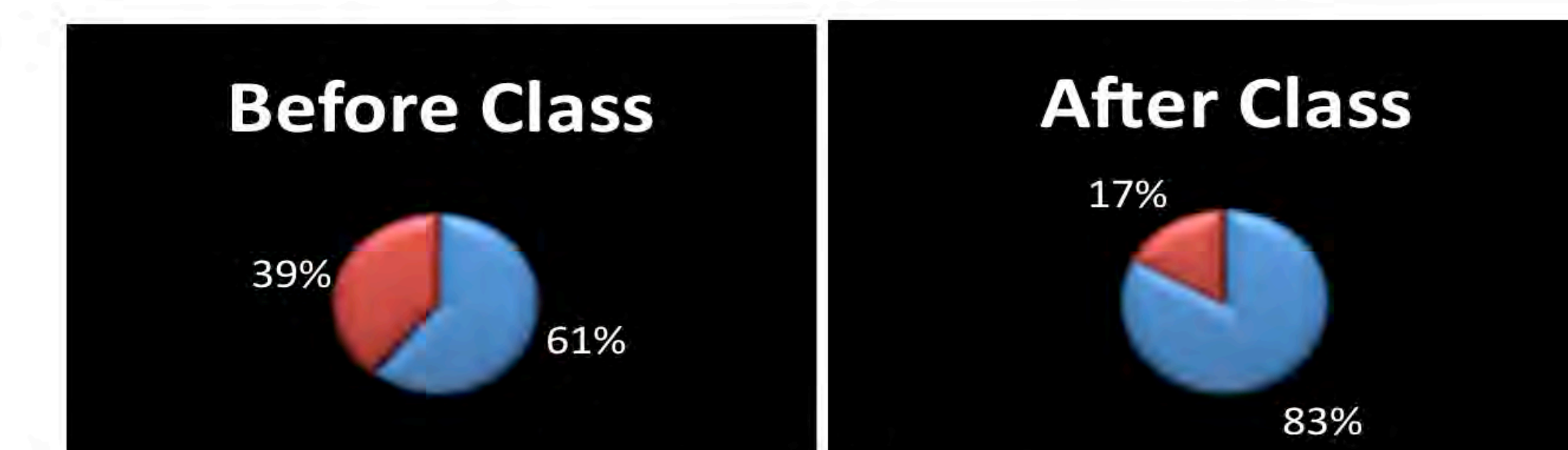
Assessed directly on a scale from 1-10. The expectation was that anxiety would drop after patients were educated on the details of chemotherapy.



Average total anxiety score before the class: 7.438
Average total anxiety score after the class: 4.795
Thus, overall anxiety level dropped by 36%

Knowledge level

Assessed by asking basic questions regarding chemotherapy, how it is processed, and how it is administered. They were true/false questions. The expectation was knowledge level would increase after completing the class.



Percentage correct before the class: 61%
Percentage correct after the class: 83%
Thus, knowledge level increased by 36%

Future Directions

- Revise/clarify survey questions to further determine the breadth and depth of patients' understanding about chemotherapy treatment and the available resources provided by the James Cancer Center and the Stefanie Spielman Breast Center.
- Compare the effectiveness of providing chemotherapy education in various media (DVD vs. telephone vs. in-person)