



Background

The Maryland Patient Navigation Network (PNN) is an entity designed to bring together individuals from public and private organizations who work in navigating patients through cancer care or who are interested in patient navigation, and to provide opportunities for networking, sharing resources, and training. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene created the PNN in 2012 after recognizing a gap in the ability of those working in patient navigation in Maryland to connect with others in the field to share resources and best practices.

Members can join the PNN as individuals or organizations working in the cancer field to navigate patients through the cancer continuum including prevention, early detection, treatment, and survivorship. As of June 2014, there are 156 members from all regions of Maryland as well as Delaware, District of Columbia and Virginia, and they work in healthcare settings, non profit organizations, state/local government, and small businesses.

PNN Initiatives

In order to bring members together, the PNN hosts an annual meeting, a website, and a listserv so that members have opportunities to interact in diverse settings.

Annual Meeting: The annual meeting is an in-person event where members can network, share ideas, hear from keynote speakers—leaders in the patient navigation field, and participate in training exercises to improve upon patient navigation skills.



	First Annual Meeting	Second Annual Meeting
Date	June 13, 2013	June 6, 2014
Attendance	111 attendees	146 attendees
Agenda	2 keynote presentations; group networking activity; 3 afternoon training sessions for attendees of all levels of navigation	2 keynote presentations; new guide to cancer survivorship and patient resources; two breakout session panels on the value of patient navigation and 2015 Commission on Cancer patient navigation standards
% Somewhat or Very Satisfied with the meeting	92%	96%
% Agreed or Strongly Agreed that keynote presentations were informative and helpful	80%	94%



Website: At the suggestion of PNN members, a website was created in 2013. Initially the website was hosted on WordPress as a blog that included News, Events, Photos, and Resources pages. Results of a 2013 needs assessment indicated that members would prefer Facebook, so in May 2014 the Network unveiled its new Facebook page: www.facebook.com/MDPNN. The Facebook page features similar content to the blog, including:

- Patient navigation news
- Events
- Resources
- Tools
- Photos
- Mechanism for members to interact

Listserv: The listserv is an e-mail group that members can use to submit opportunities, events, news, and updates to a listserv manager who shares that information with the PNN.

PNN Evaluation

The PNN is very interested in evaluating member experiences to improve the Network. A needs assessment was conducted in the fall of 2013 to determine the types of programming and experiences that members were interested in. All members had a chance to respond. Results highlights include:

- Members indicated that they had a preference for receiving information sorted by region, and they wanted information on topics such as support groups, medical resources, and financial resources.
- Members suggested several indicators of success of the PNN, including enhanced knowledge of patient navigation topics, increased opportunities for networking, and increased knowledge of available resources.
- Members indicated an interest in semi-annual webinar training opportunities.
- The assessment provided insight into how patient navigation positions are funded.

The PNN will use the needs assessment results to create targeted programming in 2014-2015. The PNN also plans to determine ways to measure and achieve the suggested indicators of success.

In the years since the formation of the Maryland Patient Navigation Network, a void in the Maryland public health landscape has been filled. There is now a space for cancer navigators to share information and connect with others, and a source for those looking for information or support. The PNN will continue to evaluate member experiences to build on its initial success in the coming years.