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A Pilot Partnership to Provide Health Information to Cancer Patients and Families

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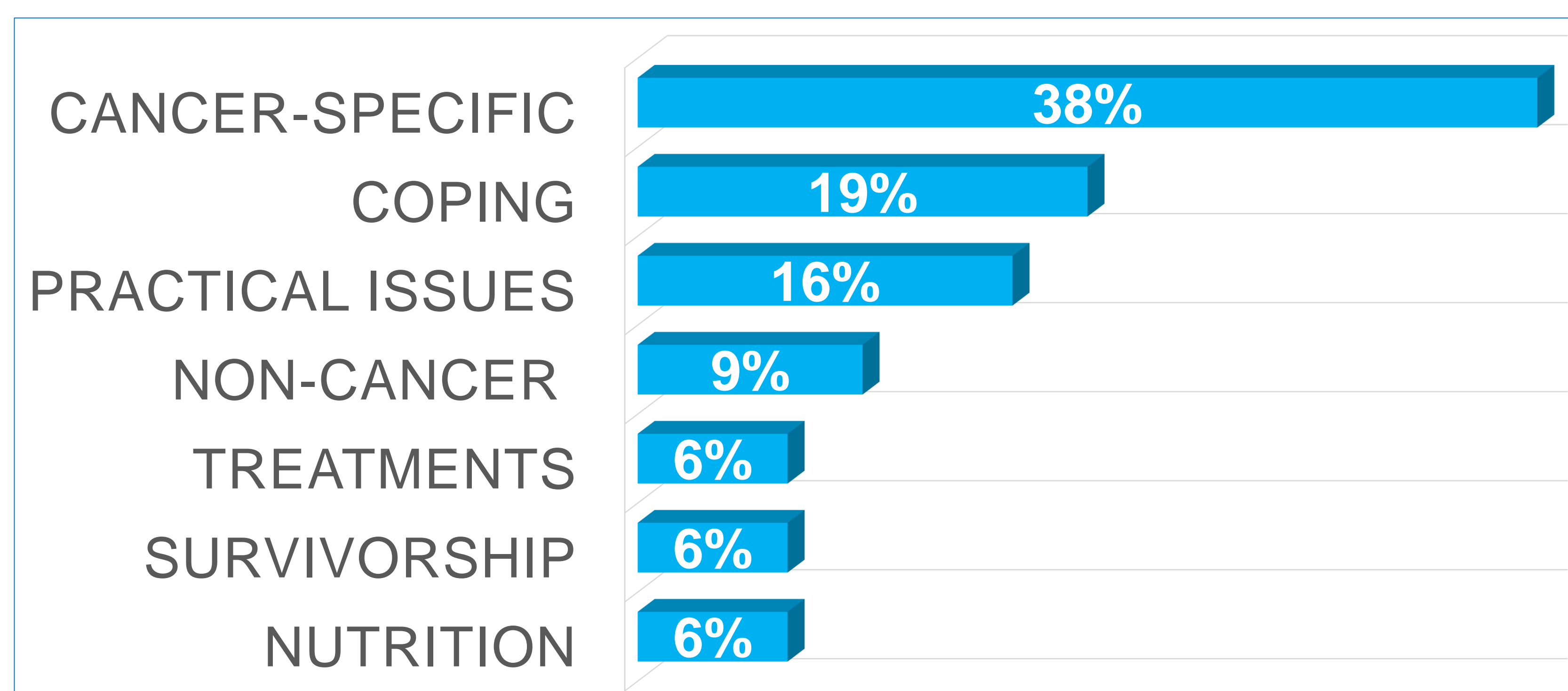
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Background: The University of Nebraska Medical Center opened the Fred and Pamela Buffett Cancer Center in Omaha, NE in June 2017. The cancer center includes a Resource and Wellness Center that meets the non-clinical needs of patients and families. McGoogan Library of Medicine participated in planning meetings for the resource center and launched a pilot partnership to embed library faculty and staff after it opened. The goals of this pilot were to: 1) provide patients and families with easy access to quality health information, 2) assess the health information needs of cancer patients and their families, and 3) explore the demand for library services in the Resource and Wellness Center.

Methods: From June 2017 through March 2018, library faculty and staff worked daily shifts at the Resource and Wellness Center and answered consumer health questions. Statistics were compiled on the number and type of health information questions received. Librarians also helped select and organize consumer health books and brochures. The library gathered additional feedback through meetings with the Oncology Patient and Family Advisory Council, clinical staff, and health system administrators.

Information Requests

The library received 32 requests for consumer health information through the Resource and Wellness Center.



- 75% of questions were received in-person.
- Most questions were submitted by a caregiver.

Lessons Learned

- **Know your audience:** Feedback from key stakeholders can provide insight on organizational culture, priority patient populations, and strategies for engaging patients and families.
- **Promote early and often:** Identify best communication channels and have a plan for when and how to market services. Also identify people who can be champions for the project within their departments.
- **Be flexible:** Be prepared to adjust to changes in timelines, roles, or funding that may impact the project activities.



Left:
Front entrance

Right:
Seating & shelves
with books &
brochures

Feedback

“You have helped us be more comfortable in our decision about treatment. We are so fortunate to have you as a resource to us.”
- Caregiver

“Are you the library person? Yay! I'm going to send as many patients here as I can.”
- Nurse

Conclusions and Next Steps

McGoogan Library adds value to the Resource and Wellness Center by providing patients, families, and staff with expertise in identifying and accessing quality health information to support cancer care. Feedback from stakeholders has affirmed the importance of the library's continued involvement in this space. This pilot has helped make librarians more accessible to patients and families, and increased the number of consumer health information questions received by the library. Future activities will include new marketing materials and activities to increase awareness of the library's presence, continued development of the collection of print materials, implementation of an evaluation form to assess patron satisfaction, and the launch of a pilot tablet-lending program.

Questions? Contact Christian Minter christian.minter@unmc.edu