
Category I

NQMBC Crosses the Ocean: A Quality Program Adopted in China

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Objective: The National Quality Measures for Breast Centers (NQMBC) originated as an idea in 2003 by the National Consortium of Breast Centers (NCBC) board who felt that increased attention was warranted, initiated by the institute of medicine, to measure, evaluate and improve the quality of breast cancer care. To serve the widespread membership of NCBC, any quality assessment program would need to be web-based so that no matter where your breast center was located, your center could assess their own level of their quality care performance. The focus of quality performance was on the level of care actually delivered for each performance measure. The NQMBC is a set of quality measures including each discipline in the breast center; imaging, surgery, pathology, medical oncology, radiation oncology, genetics, navigation and the newly added inflammatory breast cancer.

Materials and Methods: The NQMBC looks at real time data from participating breast centers across the country. Once a center's data on a particular is entered into the NQMBC, the website immediately provides comparisons with other centers' performance. The results show the submitted center's data and the comparison 25th, 50th and 75th percentile performance of all the other centers who have submitted data on that measure. A center can identify the level of performance on that specific measure and decide whether improvement is needed or congratulations is deserved. All data is confidential and not shared with any other center. No patient data is used.

Results: Recently a government grant was awarded to a group headed by Aurora Inc., striving to improve the quality of care provided in China. Experts in breast cancer care were identified to aid in this effort. Many clinicians from China have been sent for two-month observerships to Montefiore-Einstein Medical Center to see how the US approaches breast cancer. To assess the quality of care provided, the NQMBC was chosen to assess the resultant quality of care it in at least three large breast centers in China. In-person exchanges occurred this last month to initiate the integration of NQMBC as a measure of their quality breast cancer care. Goals of these three facilities is to achieve the level of a quality breast center of excellence.

Conclusion: Three main medical centers in three separate provinces, each serving a population of over 100 million, have agreed to integrate the NQMBC quality program as a measure of their breast care. This long-term pilot program has positive implications to improve the level of breast care in China, and a valuable extension of the international use of NQMBC.

Keywords: NQMBC; China; international