Developing and Evaluating a Patient-facing booklet to enhance problem-solving for achieving timely Post-Operative Radiotherapy (PORT) in Head and Neck Cancer

Crowe-Cumella, H., Coogan, M., Schaner, P., Anton, C., Caraballo Bobea, ZF., Siroonian, O., Graboyes, E., Gunn, C., Volandes, A., Saunders, C., Wasp, G.

Background:

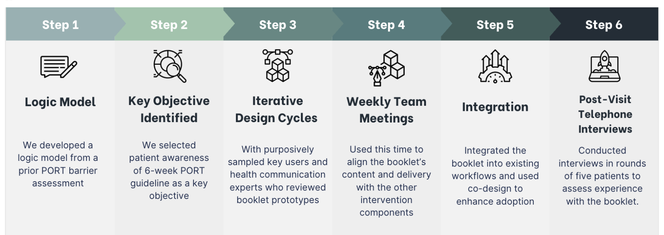
Timely initiation of postoperative radiotherapy (PORT) following surgery for head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) is a nationally endorsed quality metric, yet 50–60% of patients fail to meet it.

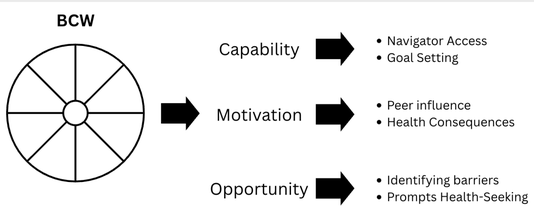
Limited awareness of this 6-week goal and of the multiple care steps that must be completed within this narrow window contribute to treatment delays.

As part of a multilevel navigation intervention, we developed and evaluated a patient-facing booklet for patient with HNSCC to support timely PORT.

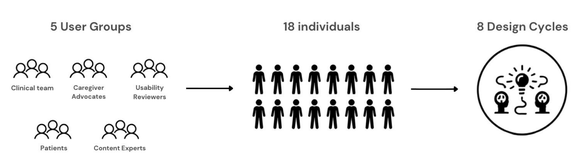
Methods:

We used the Intervention Mapping Framework and the Behavioral Change Wheel.





We conducted 8 design cycles with 18 participants who were from 5 user groups.



Theory-informed co-design reframed patient education around ***motivation***, ***activation***, and ***problem solving.***

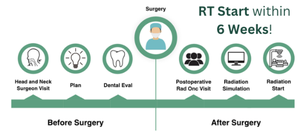
Dartmouth Health

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Results/Graphs/Data:

We had the following insights on the use of visuals:

1) Simplify Complex Information



2) Focus Attention and Emphasis



3) Provide Structure and Prompt Problem-Solving



Patient Feedback:

PATIENT 1
"I have so many appointments and so much paperwork that I've only been able to stare at the paperwork"
→ **Beware Information Inundation**

PATIENT 2
"I don't know what in the hell is going on there, I am sorry"
→ **We Needed to Better Signal the Booklet's Purpose**

PATIENT 3
"No, it was all explained, it just came through on the portal"
→ **Some Users Get It (Get Activated)**

Future Directions for Research:

Targeting patients who are three to six months out from treatment to assess their impression of the booklet might promote higher response rate and more ability to engage with providing feedback to design team.