Patient Experience in a Resource Library During COVID-19 Pandemic: Adapting Service Delivery

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The Challenge

COVID-19 Impact
In-person library services stopped and visitors restricted from campus

That was then...
The Learning Center
- Established 1996
- Consumer health library
- Three locations on campus
- 25,000 patrons served annually
- Primarily for cancer patients, family and caregivers
- Part of the Patient Education department

Creative Solutions

New Service Considerations to Meet the Challenge
- Best methods to meet patient needs virtually
- Ease and immediacy of implementation
- Ability of users to use technological solutions
- Long-term efficacy

This is now...

Live Chat and Live Text
- Added pop-up chat to existing website mdandersontlc.libguides.com
- Dedicated phone number for live text option

Electronic Patient Portal “Ask the Library”
- Built email link “Ask the Library (cancer and health information)”
- Available within MyChart Messaging on website and mobile app

Social Media Outreach
- Partnered with Strategic Communications for outreach messages

Email Question and Reference Service
- Reliable information
- Digital delivery
- Health literacy

Information Referrals from Providers
- Staff assigned directly to patients to provide reliable information
- Used a digital delivery platform

Conclusions
- Learning Center staff creatively met information needs of cancer patients, families and caregivers in a pandemic
- Provided reliable information for lifelong learning
- Offered alternatives to a Google search
- Making plans for safe library reopening

Reference

MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Established 1941
- #1 cancer hospital (U.S. News and World Report)
- 21,000+ employees
- 732 beds/25,748+ inpatients FY2020
- 1.4 million outpatient visits FY2020