Collaborative Care of Breast Cancer Management in the Bahamas”

By K. Graham
Objectives

1. Relate an overview of the history of cancer in the Bahamas
2. State formation of the Bahamas Breast Cancer Initiative Foundation
3. Explain the Bahamas statistics for BRCA
4. Describe the collaborative approach and its partners
Introduction

• The Bahamas is an archipelago of 700 islands and cays of which 29 are inhabited. Health services poses a challenge and clients have to fund airfare, housing, transportation and meals when they come to the city (Nassau) for health care.

• Cancer care is one of the most expensive services-C-scan $300; surgery fees= $3000-$10,000; port-a-cath=$650; chemo=$1500 per treatment and radiation costing more
Historical Perspective

Adult cancer care in the Nassau began in 1968 when Dr. J. Lunn returned home from University of Edinburg, and began treating patients with the two available drugs at that time. He was assisted by Nurse M. Curry. Children with cancers were referred to Mt. Sinai Hospital, USA by Dr. Stevens.
7 years later Bahamas Cancer Society (BCS) was formed due to the increasing number of cancer patients. It is a non-profit, voluntary organization, committed to the awareness, education, prevention, research, advocacy, care and cure ... patients, survivors and families and persons at risk.
Activities of BCS

• Funded training in cytology.
• 1985 purchased the first mammography machine for the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH).
• 1986 began annual screening of pap smears, exams and prostate cancer in the Family Islands.
• Established branches - Eleuthera, Abaco, Long Island
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• Research-BRCA genetic testing
• 2005- opened 10 bed double occupancy Caring Center
• 2009-purchase equipment for the new Oncology Unit at PMH
Cancer Society of the Bahamas

“Caring And Sharing”

“Working Together ... Adding Years To Our Lives”
Cancer Caring Centre
“Home-Away-From Home”
Oncology Unit at PMH

In 2009-Bahai Building was renovated into a new state-of-the-art Cancer Treatment Centre. It has multiple treatment units for chemotherapy with its own pharmacy and laboratory. It has 17 staff-medical oncologists, nursing staff, cancer registry, administrative and support staff. It offers 8 clinics:

- 2 Medical Oncologic; Gynecological & Colposcopic; Hematology; Anti-coagulation; Radiation Oncology; Pediatric Oncology; Surgical Oncology
Breast Cancer Profile in the Bahamas

• The first two studies were done by Dr. Lunn with 25 women and then 250 women showing 28% had genetic mutation.

• Financial assistance was obtained from former US Ambassador Siegel which resulted in the formation of Bahamas Breast Cancer Initiative Foundation (BBCIF, 2008).
MINISTER OF HEALTH- THE COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO BREAST CANCER CARE IN THE BAHAMAS

In September 12, 2012 Dr. P. Gomez, MOH launched of the Breast Cancer Programme to increase awareness/education. Its was a partnership between the government, NGOs and a grant from Susan G. Komen. NGOs: Marathon Bahamas, Sister Sister BC Support Group, PMH Found., GB Cancer Association, PMH– Oncology Unit, Doctors Hosp., BCS, BBCIF, MAB, NACB, RAB, HIA. To avoid overlapping meetings are held annually to relate year activities and monthly meeting for progress.

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Objectives

• Commence a national breast cancer registry
• Identify minimum age for screening
• Enhance provider and public education
• Review Medical/Nursing Acts
• Review SGK’s educational resources and adapt them
• Assess existing mammography machines
• Achieve greater outcomes by developing breast cancer policy
NGOs

- Formed in 2008 to facilitate the collaboration of multiple partners to improve breast cancer care, ...research and clinical trials... effective breast cancer treatment. Services: Free genetic testing/counseling to newly diagnosed women breast/ovarian cancer; free testing of 8000 unaffected females in 4 years; contracted US genetist, create a database.
Cont’d

• Presently, the average age of Bahamian women with breast cancer is 42 years; 48% less than 50 years old; 20% less than 40; 44% present with late stages; 43% died less than 50; 23% diagnosed carry BRCA1 gene mutation, to date the Bahamas is the only known population in the world to carry this mutation; in six Family islands women have been identified with genes and one island with 18 families.

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Sunshine Insurance Race Weekend is its sixth year marathon. Pre-eminent endurance event raising $250,000 for research and assistance cancer victims with partnership with Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

Global leader of the breast cancer movement and the world’s largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists.
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Started in 2000 to empower and educate women to actively participate in preventative health... meeting the spiritual, personal, educational, health, financial needs of victims.

Began ‘03 to strengthen health care... by funding medical equipment, promote in-service education and staff development, Oct. ’11 it launched “Caring for Breast” Campaign and brought a digital mammogram machine at cost of $500,000 doubling screening, reduce radiation exposure by 30%; allow digital storage of images, make comparative studies easier and allow for remote consultations.
Digital Mammography
Cont’d

National Committee member, assist with questionnaire design; questionnaire used at annual conference; supported fund raising activities; 110 mammograms forms dispensed and genetic screening to be conducted at 2014 symposium

Catalyst bringing together organizations, people, and resources and find, develop..projects/ activities - culture/ heritage, education enhancement, environmental protection, economic development, and health/wellness that enables Eleutherans to prosper.

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Literature distribution, assist with island screening; funds airfares to city-15 women annually; monies raised mainly by Ride for Hope Foundation. 2014 and beyond-health/wellness symposia, convert Eleuthera CS building into wellness centre with farms & deli, hire a cancer administrator, seek grant SGK for education, imaging program and micro-business training.

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Acheivements

• BBIF breast cancer registry, Onc. Unit- cancer registry; further research is needed to assess minimum age for screening; provider and public education ongoing-talks, pamphlets, billboards; Medical/Nursing Acts revision talks to begin; reviewed SGK’s educational resources and adaptation; 2 new digital mammography machines; national breast cancer policy been developed.

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References

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• Review tape-Cancer Society of the Bahamas 30th Anniversary
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