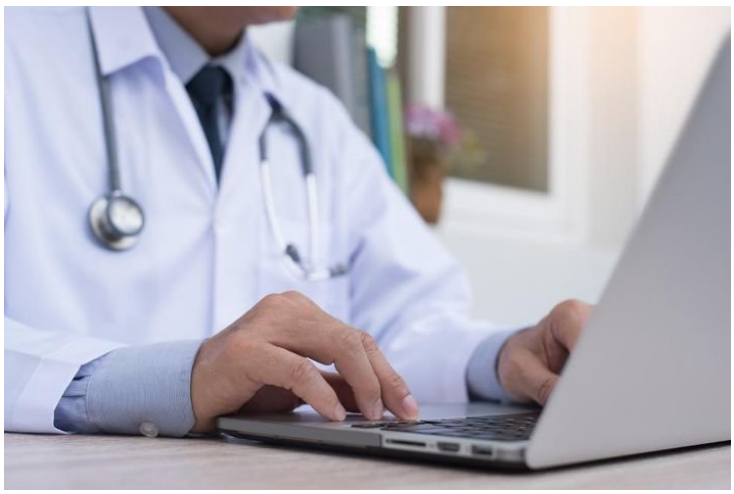
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Onco.com sees 140% jump in online consultation in Apr 2020

21 May 2020 | News

During the lockdown phase in India, availability of specialised oncology care online has been a boon for cancer patients and their families in India



Onco.com, India's leading digital platform for cancer care, recorded a significant jump of 140% in its digital consultation services in the month of April 2020. Adoption of Onco's Online Opinion grew by 53% in Tier-2 and Tier 3 markets and saw a growth of 35% growth in overall traffic to the site from non Tier-1 markets.

In under a month of its launch, 'Call Onco', the teleconsultation service launched by Onco.com saw an increase in adoption, owing to movement restrictions due to the lockdown and limited availability of doctors for in-person consultation, and were able to connect the patients with top oncologists in their network within a few hours.

Teleconsultation has seen a massive growth owing to the pressing demand for digital access to doctors and medical services during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for cancer patients, for whom delays in treatment can have severe consequences. Given its well-established network of over 1500 oncologists and 500 plus hospital partners, Onco.com has been able to support close to 10,000 patients each month by working very closely with oncologists and hospital partners to ensure continuity of care towards cancer patients, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through Call Onco, cancer patients and caregivers have been able to get advice from oncologists through a telephonic call or video conferencing, for queries ranging from their current treatment status, diagnosis, and precautions against COVID-19. Additionally, for patients looking for detailed treatment advice, Onco.com also offers a premium online opinion service called Onco Tumour Board, where patients and their caregivers can get detailed treatment advice in the form of an online report from a multi-disciplinary panel of senior oncologists. Every patient who opts for the tumor board service gets a complimentary Call Onco service as well and they can schedule the call after their report is shared. The online opinion service has also seen a significant increase in adoption across Tier-2 and 3 markets, owing to the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cancer treatment during the lockdown has been difficult and requires close coordination between multiple medical services, scheduling appointments, and coming up with solutions to innumerable problems that crop up along the way. With the rise of COVID-19 cases in India and the subsequent lockdown enforcement for the safety of the larger public, there were a number of patients who found it difficult to get the medical help they required. Onco.com was able to connect them with right oncologists despite hurdles and could maintain continuity of care through local centers.

In a recent example, a patient in Mumbai scheduled to undergo surgery for colon cancer had his appointment canceled because of inadequate staff at the hospital. The family of the patient reached out to Onco.com and got connected with a suitable partner hospital that would carry out the surgery. In addition, the assigned care manager at Onco.com ensured that the partner hospital would cover the patient's treatment through insurance, apart from providing the mandatory COVID-19 testing through a partner diagnostic center before the surgery, to ensure that all legal requirements were met. Meticulous planning and execution resulted in the patient receiving timely and successful surgery.

Ms.Rashie Jain, CEO and Co-Founder of Onco.com, says,

"In these unprecedented times, we have a singular goal - we want to ensure that every single patient receives the treatment that they require and gets the most relevant advice from experts no matter where they are. More than the geographical distances, or travel bans, what patients and caregivers seem most affected by is the lack of information on what alternatives are available to them when their current treatment is delayed or put on hold. There is a lot of uncertainty right now and we are doing every bit so that cancer patients feel safe and connected with our oncology ecosystem at all times whether or not they can travel."

"We are working in tandem with our oncologists and hospital partners to ensure continuity of care towards cancer patients. In addition, every cancer patient at Onco.com is assigned a dedicated care manager who engages with them throughout their treatment journey. " She added.

Such services have been particularly impactful for patients residing in districts, smaller towns, and even villages. In one such case, when a caregiver from Ambedkarnagar in Uttar Pradesh called Onco.com, he had no idea how to get a travel pass to take his mother, who was diagnosed with cancer, to the hospital. Even after Onco.com helped him with documentation to obtain a travel pass at the nearest police station, the caregiver struggled to communicate his requirement with the officials there. Onco.com's care manager stepped in to speak with the District Magistrate's office and other concerned officials to ensure that the travel pass was made available within the shortest possible time. This enabled the caregiver's family to travel to Lucknow to receive treatment. The patient has now completed one out of four chemotherapy cycles and the family is relieved that they were able to initiate treatment without further delay.

Dr. Amit K. Jotwani, Co-Founder and Chief Medical Officer of Onco.com mentioned,

"Cancer patients have been worst affected by the present COVID crisis. Given that most cancer patients in India are diagnosed in advanced stages, the window for a positive outcome is limited and they cannot afford to delay treatment. As we

see a relatively lower COVID-19 infection rate and case fatality rate compared to western countries, it also indicates that the risks to cancer patients in India are not as high and we can still continue their treatment as the risk of cancer progression is a concern."

"We firmly believe that teleconsultation is the way forward in the healthcare industry in India. Onco.com is contributing to this nation-wide effort by providing a solution for cancer patients and their caregivers to reach out for the best cancer care consultation, diagnostics, and treatment available in the country today. In addition, Onco's virtual Tumor Board service allows patients to get advice from a multidisciplinary panel of esteemed oncologists who work together to review a case online and develop a detailed report. The report offers advice on cutting edge treatment solutions relevant to them and also addresses any other question that the patient or their family have with regards to their treatment."

Additionally, for cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers stuck at home during the lockdown, Onco.com's community initiative, Talk Your Heart Out (TYHO), provides the much-needed support to battle the situation. Here patients and caregivers can connect online as a support group. "Even amidst the lockdown, we have been able to conduct this online and the response has been phenomenal. Onco.com also offers a peer-to-peer support service called Onco Warrior, connecting patients with survivors to help guide them through the journey, both mentally and emotionally." said Ms. Rashie Jain. A step towards building a community of cancer fighters, TYHO has been an easy and effective way to socialize and lessen the feeling of loneliness and isolation that the lockdown has brought about.

As the country starts to accept the new normal that COVID-19 has enforced, Onco.com will be a national solution for cancer patients and their families for all oncology-related queries and services.