Use of Virtual Patient Education to Improve Patient Understanding of Hereditary Cancer Risk Assessment and Genetic Literacy

Royce T. Adkins MD, FACOG; Richard N. Waldman, MD, FACOG; Mark S. DeFrancesco, MD, FACOG; John P. Feltz, MD, FACOG; Daniel S. Welling, MD, FACOG; Wade A. Neiman, MD, FACOG

Disclosures: RTA was an employee of Myriad Genetics, Inc. at the time of the study and received salary and stock options. MSD, RNW, DSW, and JPF have no disclosures to report. WAN discloses a relationship with Cooper Surgical.

OBJECTIVE:
We describe the implementation of virtual patient education (vPE) in OB/Gyn practices, and its impact on patient understanding of genetic testing.

Methods

- Hereditary cancer risk assessment (HCRA), including genetic testing, is an essential component of obstetrics and gynecology (OB/Gyn) practice.
- However, providers may lack the time or expertise to counsel patients about genetic testing and its implications.

RESULTS

- Among patients who did not complete vPE, reasons included feeling they could make an informed decision without vPE (33.6%), lack of time (17.4%), preferring to speak with their provider about testing (15.4%), and wanting to participate in vPE (5.3%).
- In the patient satisfaction survey, most patients who completed vPE agreed or strongly agreed that vPE helped them better understand the purpose of HCRA and the potential outcomes of genetic testing (93%) (Figure 3)

CONCLUSIONS

- vPE improved patients’ understanding of genetic testing and enhanced OB/Gyn providers’ ability to build patients’ genetic literacy.