



HEALTH NAVIGATOR  
FOUNDATION

**IMPROVING WELLBEING FOR HEART TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS:  
IMPLEMENTATION OF A PATIENT NAVIGATOR PROGRAM**

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[www.healthnavigators.org](http://www.healthnavigators.org)

# Overview: Who we are and what we do

- The Health Navigator Foundation (HNF) is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting the transition out of the hospital following a heart transplant.
- HNF serves a single center multi-organ transplant center in San Francisco
- The center averages 15-20 heart transplants per year
- HNF launched in November 2018 and has served 27 heart transplant patients to date
- A large part of HNF includes navigating the complexities of organ transplantation for patients and their caregiver

We aim to show how The Health Navigator Foundation, by providing individualized navigator services for 4-6 weeks following discharge from the hospital, improves wellbeing for post heart transplant recipients.

# The Health Navigator Foundation

Discharge following transplant and enrollment in HNF

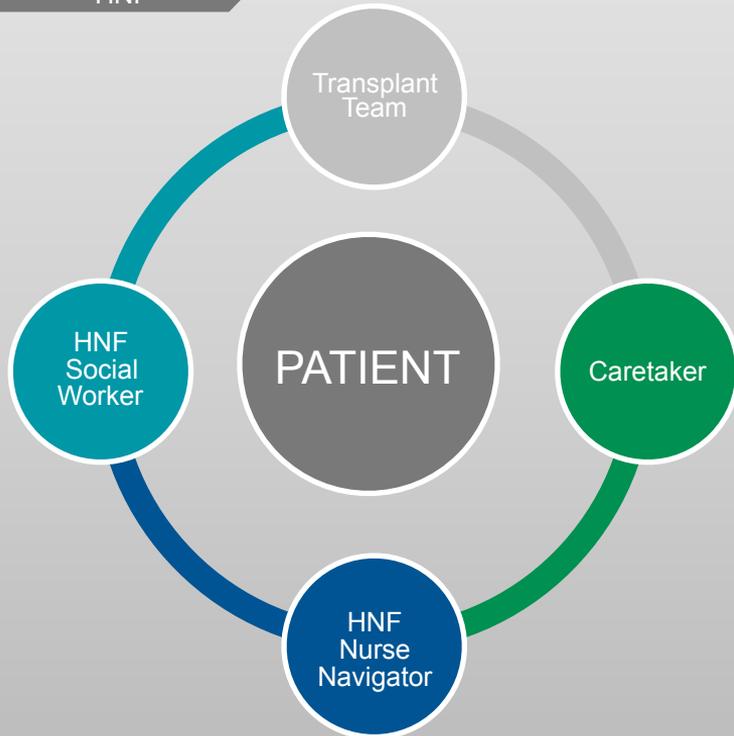
Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Left Heart Catheterization and discharge from HNF



## Services Provided

- Personal escort to lab draws, tests, procedures, clinic visits
- Attending appointments
- Medication organization
- Vital sign record/symptom log
- Meal delivery for patients and caregivers
- Local resource guide
- Caretaker support
- Housing support
- Translation services
- Disability/DMV forms
- Emotional and practical support from our social worker
- Community resource referrals for other services that may not be provided by the hospital, including massage therapy, advanced directive planning, spiritual services, and nutrition counseling

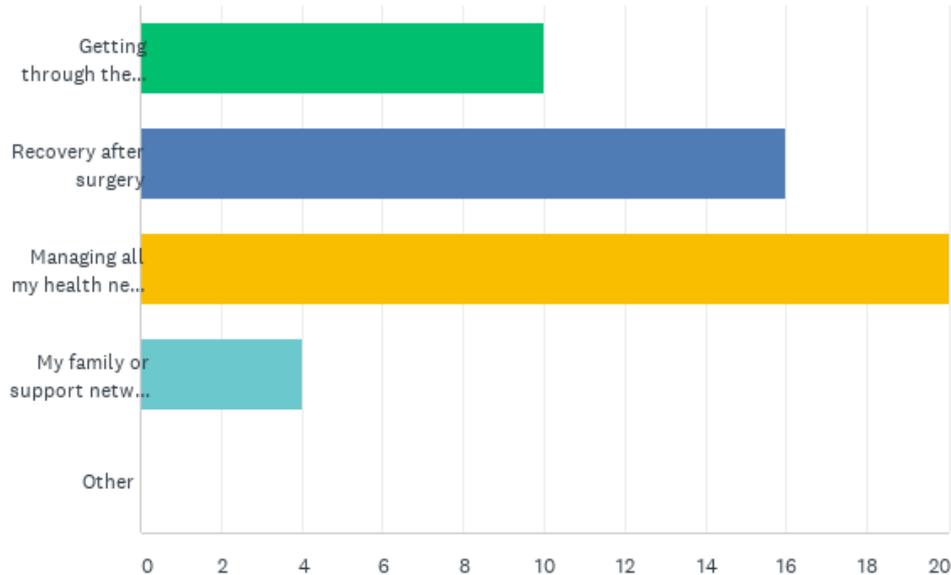
## Case Study: Health Navigator Foundation

Recipient A is middle aged individual with no relevant medical history and sudden onset of advanced heart failure. Following an ICU hospital stay and ECMO life support, Recipient A was successfully transplanted and was discharged from the hospital in approximately 2 weeks. Recipient A and their caregiver lived more than 60 miles away from the transplant center, and was required to relocate to an unfamiliar setting for 30 days.

The Health Navigator Foundation was consulted and Recipient A and their caregiver agreed to enroll. Recipient A was assigned a health navigator to accompany the recipient and caregiver to the outpatient laboratory, cardiac catheterization and echocardiogram lab, and the outpatient clinic. The Foundation provided 8 meals per week to Recipient A and their caregiver for 4 weeks. The navigator provided driving directions, suggestions to local grocery stores, gas stations, and walking trails. The navigator also provide emotional support to Recipient A and their caregiver during the time they lived in an area where they did not have family or friends locally. Due to the sudden onset of Recipient A's disease, they had little knowledge of cardiac care or transplant education. The navigator attended routine clinic follow up to help facilitate learning and make sure Recipient A understood the medical jargon and their new transplant medication regimen. Recipient A moved home after 30 days and completed an exit interview with the Health Navigator Foundation. 9 months later, Recipient A reached out to the Health Navigator Foundation and volunteered to serve as a mentor for potential transplant candidates. Recipient A currently reports feeling well and feels acclimated to transplant life.

# Pre-Health Navigator Program Survey

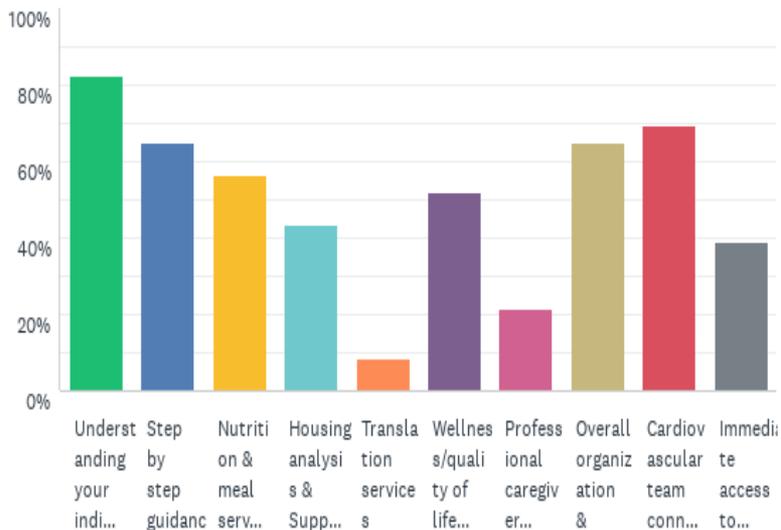
Q5 What are you greatest concerns with the transplant process? (select all that apply)



Managing all my health care needs

# Pre-Health Navigator Program Survey

Q2 What aspects of the Health Navigator Program do you think will be most useful for you?



Top 3 needs Identified:

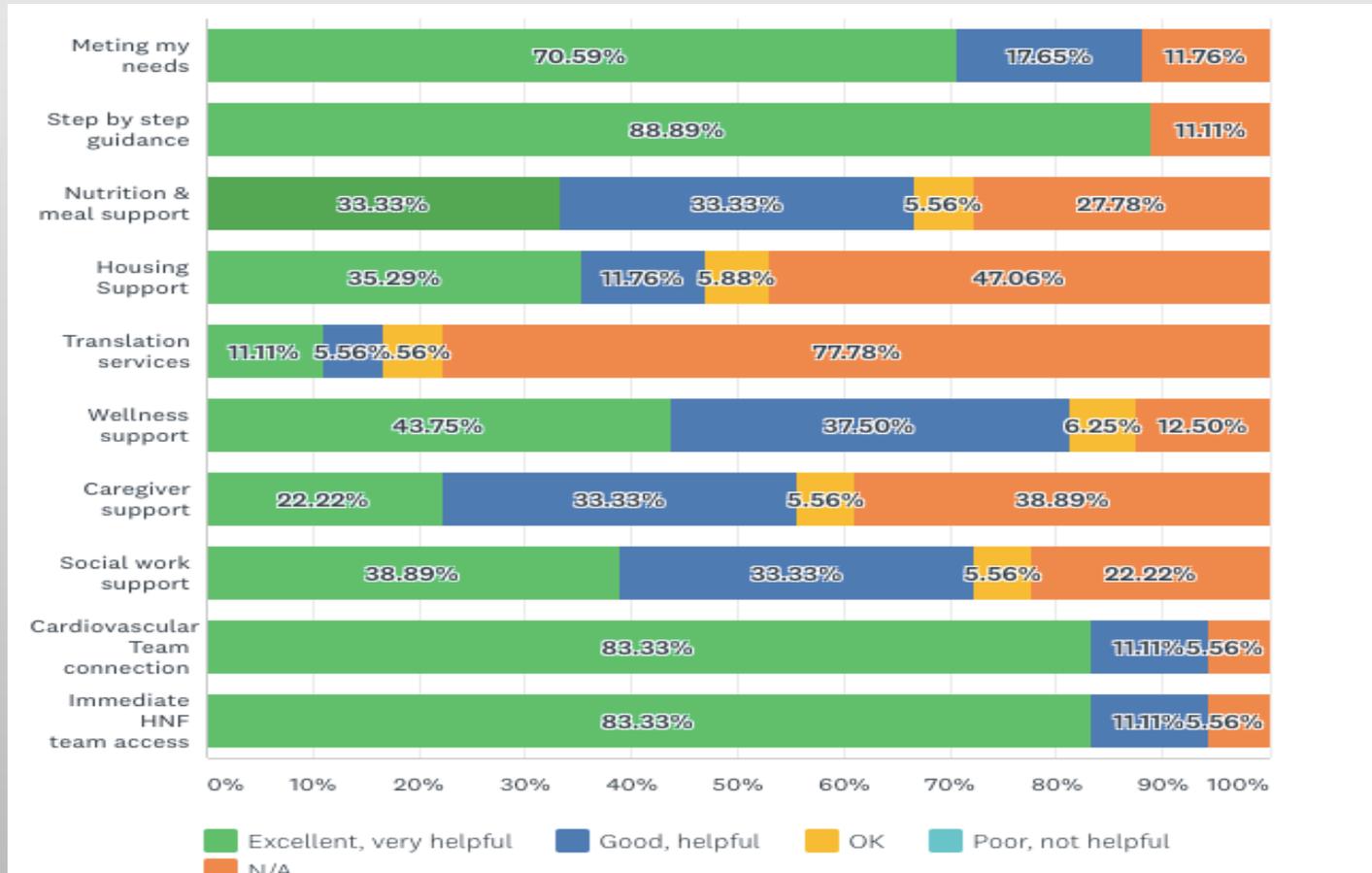
Understanding individual needs

Step by step guidance

Connection to cardiovascular team

# Exit Survey Results: Most helpful aspects of the Health Navigator Program

Most highly rated:  
 Meeting my individual needs  
 Cardiovascular team connection  
 Immediate access to a HNF team member



# Conclusions

- Implementation of a health navigator program to improve wellbeing of heart transplant recipients is feasible
- >90% would recommend program highly
- >80% found attending to individualized needs an excellent service
- Immediate access to navigator team or connection to heart transplant team are most effective aspects of navigator program



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# Bibliography

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You can also connect with us on instagram [@healthnavigatorfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/healthnavigatorfoundation)

Check out our website at [www.healthnavigators.org](http://www.healthnavigators.org)

