Awareness

Patient Experience

Awareness / Inciting Event

When Marie (53) wakes up with a tender spot in her breast, she feels a small lump and grows uneasy. Remembering the Breast Center at Goleta Valley, she calls to schedule a mammogram but learns she needs a referral—and she doesn't have a primary care provider. After hanging up, she opens her laptop and searches online, hoping to find a doctor who can see her soon.

Needs

Marie needs a clear, timely pathway to receive a diagnostic mammogram without unnecessary delays.

Cottage Experience

Description

The Receptionist answers the phone at Breast Imaging at Goleta Valley. She tells Marie that she needs a referral for a diagnostic mammogram and that she should connect with her Primary Care Provider for a referral. Once she has a referral, then a diagnostic mammogram will be able to be scheduled.

People Involved

Clinic Coordinator

Systems Involved

Phone Call

Pain Point

Lack of established primary care provider causes a delay in referral process.

Seeking Treatment

Patient Experience

Primary Care Appointment

Marie finds an appointment with a Primary Care Physician in two weeks and signs up for Fast Pass, hoping to get in sooner. When the day arrives, she explains she's found a lump and needs a mammogram. Reassured she'll be contacted soon, she leaves with a follow-up note—but a week later, no one has called, and her concern turns to frustration as she makes the call herself.

Needs

Marie needs clear communication and reliable follow-up from the imaging center.

Pain Point

The delay in scheduling creates uncertainty and heightens anxiety while waiting for next steps.

Cottage Experience

Description

Online Scheduling books Marie for a new patient visit. Her provider reviews her chart and completes a new patient questionnaire to get to know her, then orders a mammogram that waits in the imaging queue for insurance authorization.

People Involved

PCP

Systems Involved

Epic - Patient info | CH Website - Scheduling

Patient Experience

Diagnostic Imaging and Biopsy

Another week passes before Marie finally gets a call from the Imaging Center to schedule her diagnostic mammogram for Friday at 1 pm and fortunately can schedule her biopsy right afterward at 2pm. She arrives for the appointment, where a radiology tech performs the imaging and sends it to the radiologist. The radiologist then meets with Marie and completes her biopsy.

Needs

Marie needs a fast test result turnaround to ease uncertainty and emotional stress.

Cottage Experience

Description

CNC reviews the queue and secures Marie's insurance approval. Marie is set up for an appointment. The radiologist reads the mammogram, spots something suspicious, and sends it to pathology. Meanwhile, Marie's provider, unsure if the tests were done or where, calls both Marie and imaging centers until finally reaching Marie, who confirms she went to Breast Imaging at Goleta Valley.

People Involved

CNC | Radiologist | PCP

Systems Involved

Epic- Care Everywhere | Phone Call

Pain Point

Providers are losing time tracking down tests results.

Patient Experience

Diagnosis

A few days later, her Primary Care Provider's office calls Marie and tells her she should schedule a follow-up to review the results. Marie hangs up, her relief quickly giving way to worry about what the results might reveal. A few days later, she meets with her Primary Care Provider and learns that the pathology shows cancerous cells. The diagnosis, stage 3 breast cancer, lands heavily, as her doctor explains that an oncologist will reach out soon.

Needs

Marie needs emotional support and clear guidance on her next steps after diagnosis.

Cottage Experience

Description

Pacific Diagnostic Laboratories (PDL) confirms cancer and sends the results to Marie's provider. She reads the pathology report but still can't find the mammogram in Care Everywhere. After tracking down both reports, she calls Marie to share the diagnosis: stage three breast cancer.

People Involved

PCP | PDL | Pueblo Radiology

Systems Involved

Epic - Care Everywhere | Phone Call

Pain Point

Tests are not sent to one consistent location, creating confusion and delays in care.

Outcome

Patient Experience

Transition to Oncology Care

Marie begins processing her diagnosis and waits for a call from the oncology department. Days pass with no outreach. She finally calls herself, only to learn her referral is still being processed. When the appointment is confirmed, she feels both relieved and exhausted. She wishes someone had stayed in touch to help her navigate this unfamiliar, frightening journey.

Needs

Marie needs a coordinated transition to oncology care, with steady communication and emotional support throughout the process

Pain Point

Care lacks continuity. Patient is left to manage logistics during a highly vulnerable time.

Cottage Experience

Description

The oncology referral routes through the standard electronic system and appears in the scheduling queue after several days. Oncology staff reach out to Marie to let her know her insurance has been approved so she can schedule her appointment.

People Involved

Oncologist | Clinic Coordinator

Systems Involved

Epic- Referrals