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The New York Times
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Dear Editor,

I read with great interest Denise Grady's July 29th article "Cancer Patients, Lost in a Maze of Uneven Care." No matter what your age or life status, cancer is an overwhelming disease for both patients and their families.

The best advice for a person diagnosed with cancer is to consult with specialists of all cancer disciplines, including radiation oncology, surgery and medical oncology, BEFORE selecting a course of treatment. The patient can then review all the treatment options, evaluate the side effects, recovery times and risks, and decide which option seems best for them. It also allows all questions to be answered, and much confusion to be avoided.

Since cancer treatment usually requires the teamwork and expertise of several cancer specialists working together, in a highly coordinated manner, it is important for the patient to consult with each of the physicians involved, before treatment begins, to best organize the plan of care. This approach, frequently termed "multi-disciplinary care," is the best way to avoid the "uneven" and uncoordinated care that was appropriately discussed in the article, and serves to give the patient the best chances of achieving the best result.

Sincerely,

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