



TOGETHER *for*
SUPPORTIVE
CANCER CARE

Consensus Paper

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Executive Summary

Each day, countless individuals, families, and loved ones across the United States are affected by cancer, and they deserve access to whole-person care that is tailored to their needs at every step of their cancer journey.

Supportive cancer care is a comprehensive, whole-person approach to care that ensures people's needs are met throughout the cancer continuum by providing physical, emotional, spiritual, community, patient education, and social and economic support. Studies show that coordinated supportive care leads to improved treatment outcomes and quality of life for people with cancer, while providing higher-value care and lowering healthcare costs. However, the benefits of supportive care are not currently accessible to everyone with cancer.

Together for Supportive Cancer Care is a cross-sector coalition of organizations committed to expanding early access to supportive care for all people with cancer, regardless of where they receive care. Our mission is to establish supportive cancer care as the national standard for cancer care, ensuring the needs of people with cancer and their caregivers are met at every step—throughout diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship.



A Roadmap for Advancing Early, Equitable Access to Supportive Cancer Care

We can effect meaningful change, ensuring that people with cancer receive timely, comprehensive, and equitable supportive care. We will achieve this goal by bringing together organizations to amplify current efforts, share best practices, and identify new solutions. Here we outline the initial first steps, across three critical focus areas.

Advocating for Policies That Address the Entire Cancer Journey

We will promote policies that support the full scope of a patient's cancer journey, from diagnosis through treatment and survivorship. Our coalition will work to expand legislative efforts that improve access to supportive care services and ensure every person with cancer receives the care they need.

Demonstrating the Impact of the Supportive Cancer Care Model

We aim to build a strong case for the benefits of supportive care through research, testing, and evaluation, which includes pilot programs. By gathering data on patient outcomes, quality of life, and cost savings, we can strongly advocate for the adoption of supportive care models at both state and federal levels.

Increasing Employer Engagement and Commitment

We will work with employers to support and expand their commitment to supportive cancer care. Employers play a critical role in expanding access to supportive cancer care, because employers can create programs that provide supportive care benefits to employees and their families, while advocating for improved coverage and services within the broader healthcare system.

For more information and to get involved, visit www.SupportiveCancerCare.org

The Impact of Supportive Cancer Care

Every day, cancer impacts the lives of countless people, families, and loved ones across the United States. Supportive cancer care is shown to **improve outcomes for people with cancer**, such as addressing their physical and emotional health needs, as well as economic and environmental factors, while also fostering a more effective healthcare system by **improving efficiencies** and **reducing costs**. That is why supportive care should be the standard for cancer care for all people, regardless of who they are or where they receive care.

Across the landscape of supportive cancer care, we are seeing improved outcomes, better quality of life, and higher value care and lower long-term costs. But these advancements are currently concentrated in specific areas of the care spectrum. It is critical that the benefits reach every person affected by cancer.

Additionally, [advances](#) in diagnosis, surgery, radiotherapy, and new drugs have led to improvements in cancer survival. People now live nearly six times longer after their cancer diagnosis than was the case 40 years ago. Yet despite this significant progress, a large proportion of people with cancer still experience morbidity and symptoms, resulting from the cancer and/or its treatment.

Improved Outcomes: People who receive supportive care experience higher disease-free survival rates, especially for blood cancers.

Several United States studies recently reported that coordinated care trials that actively engaged people with chronic disease resulted in significant mortality reductions compared to a control group who only took appropriate medications. The studies suggest that when people have coordinated, supportive care they are able to be more compliant with their clinical care.

Better Quality of Life: People who receive early, consistent access to supportive care feel more in control of their care and that their wishes are better communicated and understood by their loved ones and clinical team.

Research and clinical experience in dedicated centers have demonstrated that early appropriate supportive care interventions improve symptoms, quality of life, and overall survival and lower healthcare costs.¹ There is a need for supportive cancer care across all patients with cancer to help improve better quality of life.

Higher Value Care & Lower Healthcare Costs: People who receive supportive care experience shorter stays in the hospital and fewer ICU admissions/emergency room visits—reducing overall healthcare costs. That means supportive care investments will reduce overall system costs over a person's treatment period.

¹Berman R, Davies A, Cooksley T, Gralla R, Carter L, Darlington E, Scotté F, Higham C. Supportive Care: An Indispensable Component of Modern Oncology. Clin Oncol (R Coll Radiol). 2020 Nov;32(11):781-788. doi: 10.1016/j.clon.2020.07.020. Epub 2020 Aug 16. PMID: 32814649; PMCID: PMC7428722.

Supportive cancer care is a comprehensive, whole-person approach to care that ensures the needs of people with cancer and their caregivers are met at every step of their cancer journey in an individually tailored manner.

Supportive care services can be categorized into six main areas: physical, psychological/emotional, spiritual, community, environmental and economic, and educational.

Supportive cancer care includes:

Physical: Relieving symptoms and side effects related to the disease or treatment, such as pain management and nutritional support.

Psychological: Supporting the emotional, psychological, and mental health of a person during treatment and survivorship, such as counseling.

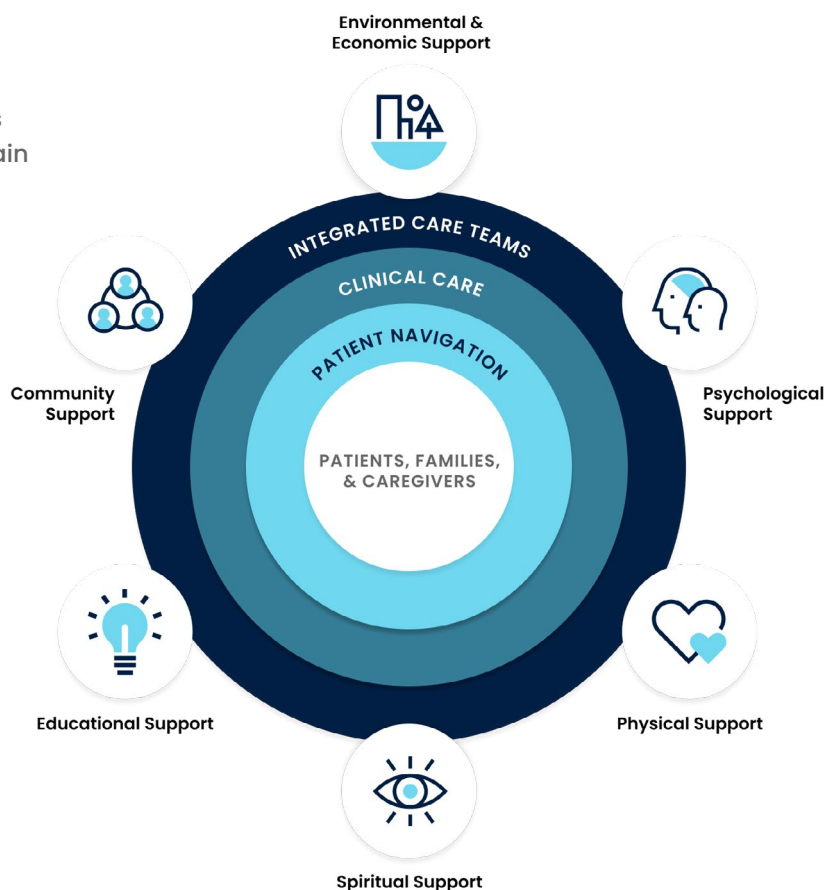
Spiritual: Helping those who wish to better understand how their experience fits within their spiritual and cultural beliefs, such as faith-based support.

Community: Fostering and strengthening relationships that provide community support, such as community resources and support networks.

Environmental and Economic: Addressing economic barriers that prevent a person from accessing care, adhering to treatment, and thriving during treatment and survivorship, such as transportation access and safe housing.

Educational: Improving understanding of care options and empowering personalized decision making related to quality of life, such as educational resources.

Supportive cancer care also includes providing caregiver support, acknowledging caregivers' crucial role throughout a cancer journey.



We use this definition of supportive cancer care as our guide. At the same time, we also recognize the many years of definitional work around this approach to care, especially in the field of palliative care. We are committed to ongoing collaboration around language, so we can best work together towards a future in which all people across the U.S. have early, equitable access to supportive cancer care.

Diving Deeper into Supportive Cancer Care's Transformative Value

Early, ongoing and equitable access to supportive cancer care improves quality of life, extends survivorship, and reduces costs. Over the past year, we have conducted critical research to explore the barriers to supportive cancer care and better understand the needs that exist for expanded access. We found for both providers and people with cancer and their caregivers, there is a consensus that supportive cancer care is important to health outcomes (95%). Additionally, a majority support the idea of supportive cancer care as the national standard and agree that cancer outcomes cannot improve unless all people with cancer have equitable access to supportive cancer care (8 in 10 patients and healthcare providers).



8 in 10 patients and healthcare practitioners:

- Support supportive cancer care as the national standard
- Agree that cancer outcomes cannot improve unless all patients have equitable access to supportive cancer care

Results of the survey show that there are barriers to making such care a reality for every person with cancer. For providers, lack of insurance coverage for services (86%) and lack of knowledge about services by people with cancer (82%) were cited as top barriers.

For people with cancer and their caregivers, the top barriers reported were lack of information from healthcare practitioners (55%) and a perceived lack

In February 2023, the Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation conducted online surveys among more than 1,000 people with cancer or survivors of cancer and surveyed more than 150 healthcare practitioners across the United States who had recently treated people with cancer, including physicians, nurses, and physician associates.

Additionally, In November and December 2023, the Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation conducted online surveys among more than 6,000 people with cancer and their caregivers and more than 1,500 healthcare providers in six states (Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Ohio). The goal was to measure the knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of people with cancer and their caregivers and of healthcare providers when it comes to supportive cancer care.



Only 3 in 10 healthcare practitioners say cancer patients have equitable access to supportive cancer care.

of insurance coverage for services (53%). These challenges underscore the necessity for continued research, policy changes, and education to ensure that the benefits of supportive cancer care reach every person with cancer.

Additionally, we discovered that there are large gaps in knowledge of supportive cancer care between providers and people with cancer and their caregivers. Providers reported frequently referring people with cancer to supportive care services (96%), but people with cancer and their caregivers report less frequency in using those supportive cancer care services (61%). Also, the majority of people with cancer either do not believe supportive cancer care is affordable or are neutral about affordability (71%). Favorable attitudes of people with cancer/caregivers towards supportive cancer care vary by drivers of health, such as income, education, and care setting access.

Additional [research](#) on supportive cancer care has revealed that people with advanced cancer reported the highest unmet needs in financial, health system and information, psychological, and physical and daily living, whereas caregivers reported the highest unmet needs in psychological, and patient care and support domains. Additionally, previous research has primarily focused on the supportive care needs of people with early-stage disease, overlooking an important and ever-growing subgroup of people living with advanced cancer, whose life goals and care needs are invariably different with uncertain futures, diminished ability to continue daily activities,



2 in 3 patients reported that they have not heard of supportive cancer care or were unsure.

and an inability to fulfill social roles, underpinning their psychosocial and financial burden.

Quality survivorship care includes prevention and surveillance for recurrences and new cancers, surveillance and management of physical effects, and surveillance and management of psychosocial effects and chronic conditions, and it emphasizes health promotion and disease prevention. [Studies](#) show that over time, a number of barriers in implementing survivorship care plans emerged. Despite areas of progress, cancer survivors continue to suffer from disease recurrence; new cancers; cardiovascular disease; neuropathy; sarcopenia; and psychological impairments, including depression, anxiety, and fear of recurrence. Even when cured from their cancer, overall survival falls short relative to the age-matched general population. The need for additional research focusing on prevention, early detection, and interventions, coupled with development of better strategies to implement programs that improve the lives of survivors, must be given higher priority in the United States and globally.

Disparities in Cancer Care

A growing body of [research](#) highlights the critical impact of engaging people with cancer on their care experience. Many individuals from historically underserved communities often receive fewer preventive services, face delays in diagnosis, and experience postponed treatment after diagnosis. According to the [National Cancer Institute](#), cancer disparities affect groups defined by factors such as race/ethnicity, disability, gender identity, geography, income, education, sexual orientation, age, and more. For example, Black Americans have higher death rates than other racial and ethnic groups for many cancers. Medical mistrust, stemming from historical mistreatment, is a key factor contributing to these disparities, but studies show that it can be reduced through effective patient engagement. Research also demonstrates that better engagement not only increases trust but also gives people with cancer a greater sense of control and reduces uncertainty during their cancer journey.

THE PATH AHEAD:

Together for Supportive Cancer Care



To make supportive cancer care a reality for every person with cancer, regardless of their care setting, we must build upon and grow awareness to create a groundswell of support among people with cancer, caregivers, cancer care providers and care centers, community-based organizations, employers, insurers, pharmaceutical companies, and policymakers. This collaborative approach can help ensure that supportive care is integrated into the cancer care continuum, improving quality of life, extending survivorship, and reducing healthcare costs.

With more and more people living with and surviving cancer, we need more multi-sector, sustainable efforts to improve access to supportive cancer care and make it the national standard for cancer care in the United States.

That is why, in March 2024, the Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation convened the Together for Supportive Cancer Care Summit with a cross-sector group of organizations representing people living with cancer, cancer care providers, policy experts, and industry stakeholders that represented pharmaceutical companies, employers, and insurers,

to explore avenues for enhancing early, equitable access to supportive cancer care.

Through robust discussions and shared insights, participants identified potential pathways for improving access. Key topics among these was the idea that there is a need for consensus and collaboration to drive increased early, equitable, and ongoing access to supportive cancer care in the form of a coalition. Bringing together diverse stakeholders—from healthcare providers and community organizations to policy influencers and pharmaceutical companies—creates an opportunity to amplify existing efforts and build capacity for sustainability.

This new coalition of organizations, the Together for Supportive Cancer Care Coalition, can help elevate individual initiatives into a unified strategy through shared resources, collective advocacy, and coordinated action. A collaborative approach can drive policy changes, improve understanding, and ultimately ensure that supportive cancer care is accessible and a standard for all people diagnosed with cancer in the United States.

A Roadmap for Advancing Early, Equitable Access to Supportive Cancer Care

We can effect meaningful change, ensuring that people with cancer receive timely, comprehensive, and equitable supportive care. We will achieve this goal by bringing together organizations to amplify current efforts, share best practices, and identify new solutions. To ensure accountability and continuous improvement, we will actively track the progress of the coalition, regularly evaluating the outcomes and impact of our efforts.

Here we outline key challenges and initial first steps, across three critical focus areas.

FOCUS AREA

Advocating For Policies That Address the Entire Cancer Journey, Resulting in Better Outcomes and Cost-Savings

THE CHALLENGE

Current policy for cancer care and survivorship fails to address the full scope of a person's journey with cancer and the range of solutions needed. Furthermore, the intricate nature of supportive care, its benefits, and policy options for enhancing equitable access may not be fully recognized by policymakers. It is crucial to spread awareness among policymakers about how supportive cancer care can lead to cost savings and better outcomes for people with cancer and caregivers.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Expanding and initiating policies that build upon successes in legislative and regulatory change related to palliative care, drivers of health, mental health, and the health workforce will ensure that there is coverage for every step of the cancer journey.

To work towards this, we will:

- Map and understand successful state and federal policies across the areas within the supportive cancer care approach and related to survivorship.
- Use the results of the mapping to convene and inform a policy agenda, as well as further plans for research and pilot programs, building on existing efforts by organizations in the coalition.
- Build upon and support existing efforts that demonstrate improved outcomes and cost saving, while educating federal- and state-level policymakers and advocating for policy change.

FOCUS AREA

Demonstrating the Impact of the Supportive Cancer Care Approach Through Research, Testing, and Evaluation

THE CHALLENGE

There is a need to compile and amplify existing research that demonstrates the proven benefits of supportive cancer care while supporting additional third-party data and research demonstrating supportive cancer care improves quality of life, extends survivorship, and reduces costs. This can be the foundational case study to advocate to states and the federal government to adopt comprehensive models for reimbursing supportive cancer care.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Elevating supportive care at the federal level and building capacity for sustainable state-level collaboratives among care facilities, community-based organizations, insurers, and employers on supportive cancer care will test and further demonstrate the impact of a supportive cancer care approach.

To work towards this, we will:

- Identify and engage states where there is an opportunity to test and evaluate successful supportive cancer care models through cross-sector collaboration.
- Educate key audiences about the positive impacts of the supportive care approach on quality of life, outcomes, and higher-value, lower-cost care over the long term, and advocate for adoption in other states.
- Develop a meaningful set of metrics that can be used to amplify the work.

FOCUS AREA

Increasing Employer Understanding of and Commitment to Supportive Cancer Care, Working in Partnership to Support Employees

THE CHALLENGE

Employers can play a key role in driving access to supportive cancer care and need to be more fully engaged as integrated partners in cross-sector advocacy for supportive care.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Employers can serve as a key advocate, both internally and externally, for increasing equitable access to supportive cancer care that better helps employees who may be living with cancer, survivors, or caregivers.

To work towards this, we will create a multipronged program that will guide employers to understand the benefits of supportive care for their employees, evaluate their current policies, advocate for improved coverage options, and amplify demand for better coverage and services within their organizations and industries. Research has shown that early supportive care lowers costs for the employee, employer and the health system.

Advocating For Policies That Address the Entire Cancer Journey, Resulting in Better Outcomes and Cost-Savings

The Challenge

Current policy for cancer care and survivorship fails to address the full scope of a person's journey with cancer and the range of solutions needed. Furthermore, the intricate nature of supportive care, its benefits, and policy options for enhancing equitable access may not be fully recognized by policymakers. It is crucial to spread awareness among policymakers about how supportive cancer care can lead to cost savings and better outcomes for people with cancer and caregivers.

From the day of diagnosis, every person's journey with cancer will be a different experience—yet each journey is complex and often overwhelming. Every person will have unique needs that will need to be addressed, which is why cancer care must be comprehensive and must center around the person living with cancer. Achieving equitable, early access to supportive cancer care requires policy solutions that address the full scope of a person's journey with cancer. These solutions must promote patient navigation, improve care coordination, and expand workforce capacity.

Because supportive cancer care must be tailored to the individual, navigation needs for each person with cancer are also unique. One of the primary challenges in achieving equitable, early access to supportive cancer care is a lack of patient navigation, which is a role that can be filled by clinical patient navigators and other health professionals, such as community health workers. Effective patient navigation is often impeded by workforce shortages, as well as the absence of clear definitions and standardized practices for navigation. Fortunately, recent progress has been

made in securing reimbursement for navigation services under President Biden's administration's Cancer Moonshot initiative, which introduced new codes for Principal Illness Navigation in the 2024 Physician Fee Schedule.² Still, more policy change is needed to ensure all patients have access to effective patient navigation.

There is also a need for better care coordination within care centers and across care settings, as well as coordination as it relates to people outside of traditional care settings. Supportive cancer care requires a multidisciplinary team approach, involving oncologists, nurses, social workers, community health workers, psychologists, and other professionals. However, policies have often failed to recognize the need for this level of integration, leading to fragmented care and related challenges that impede supportive care.

By addressing these challenges, policymakers can help to ensure that all people with cancer have access to the supportive care that they need. However, there remains a significant need for education among policymakers about supportive cancer care and its proven benefits, including cost-savings and improved outcomes for patients and caregivers.

The Road Ahead

Expanding and initiating policies that build upon successes in legislative and regulatory change related to palliative care, drivers of health, mental health, and the health workforce will ensure that there is coverage for every step of the cancer journey.

² FACT SHEET: Biden Cancer Moonshot Announces Commitments from Leading Health Insurers and Oncology Providers to Make Navigation Services Accessible to More than 150 Million Americans | OSTP, The White House. Published March 8, 2024. Accessed April 18, 2024. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/news-updates/2024/03/08/fact-sheet-biden-cancer-moonshot-announces-commitments-from-leading-health-insurers-and-oncology-providers-to-make-navigation-services-accessible-to-more-than-150-million-americans/>

Summit participants agreed that the complexities of supportive cancer care have made it challenging for federal and state policymakers and private payers to make sweeping progress. By analyzing specific policy successes and failures to date, we can begin to inform decisions and chart a path forward.

Map and understand successful state and federal policies across the areas within the supportive cancer care approach and related to survivorship.

As a first step, stakeholders will map out an overview of policy successes and limitations to date to better inform consensus for a policy agenda.

The map should explore past legislative and regulatory change related to different services within the supportive cancer care approach (e.g., palliative care, mental healthcare, drivers of health) and solutions to build workforce capacity and better integrate work across care settings.

Learning from Policy-Driven Solutions: Spotlight on National Diabetes Prevention Program

The program is an example of how standardized programing was able to build workforce capacity by training people in local communities. Congress authorized the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish the National Diabetes Prevention Program, a public-private initiative that provides the framework for type 2 diabetes prevention efforts in the United States. Through this program, CDC-recognized lifestyle change programs have Lifestyle Coaches, who are trained to use a CDC-approved curriculum and who have the knowledge and skills to effectively deliver the program. Numerous research studies and evaluations have repeatedly shown that the National Diabetes Prevention Program improved health outcomes and is cost-effective or cost-saving.

Use the results of the mapping to convene and inform a policy agenda, as well as further plans for research and pilot programs, building on existing efforts by organizations in the coalition. Through the mapping, the coalition can begin to build a clearly defined policy agenda. This process will allow coalition members to understand where there

is a need for further advocacy to champion existing or new policy proposals. Additionally, mapping will allow coalition members to better understand each other's current advocacy efforts, so that the coalition can support existing efforts that are being led by its members. This support will allow for a breakdown of silos in advocacy efforts and greater convening around solutions that have already been identified.

Elevating Existing Advocacy Efforts: Spotlight on the Community Health Worker Access Act

The Community Health Worker Access Act is an example of ongoing advocacy work to support community health workers, who often play a central role in supportive care as patient navigators. Regarding Medicaid in most states, there is no legislation that acknowledges community health workers as a profession. The Community Health Worker Access Act is an opportunity to greatly expand community health workers' roles.

Build upon and support existing efforts that demonstrate improved outcomes and cost saving, while educating federal- and state-level policymakers and advocating for policy change.

Educating policymakers at the state and local level about the benefits of supportive cancer care remains crucial. Despite its complexity, understanding supportive care is key to recognizing its benefits, which includes long-term savings through improved outcomes and reduced hospital stays. There is a need to shift the focus of legislatures from short-term costs to long-term value, to foster policies that promote and fund solutions for equitable access to supportive cancer care.

Educating Policymakers for Legislative Change: Spotlight on The Comprehensive Cancer Survivorship Act

An example of a bill with bipartisan support includes the Comprehensive Cancer Survivorship Act, which aims to improve quality of care and navigation of healthcare systems throughout the cancer care continuum from diagnosis into survivorship. This act aligns with the idea that the supportive cancer approach improves outcomes and reduces long-term costs.

Demonstrating the Impact of the Supportive Cancer Care Approach Through Research, Testing, and Evaluation

The Challenge

There is a need to compile and amplify existing research that demonstrates the proven benefits of supportive cancer care while supporting additional third-party data and research demonstrating supportive cancer care improves quality of life, extends survivorship, and reduces costs. This can be the foundational case study to advocate to states and the federal government to adopt comprehensive models for reimbursing supportive cancer care.

There is a growing body of research demonstrating that supportive cancer care improves outcomes for people with cancer, improves the quality of life, and alleviates costs on the healthcare system by providing higher value care. Numerous studies consistently demonstrate that access to supportive care programs has a direct impact on outcomes, quality of life, and survival.³ Furthermore, supportive cancer care benefits people with cancer, regardless of the stage of disease.⁴ Some examples of this impact include research that shows supportive care programs contribute to a decrease in the length of hospital stays, reduced rates of hospital readmissions, and fewer intensive care unit admissions; supportive cancer care also alleviates the financial burden of the disease for people living with cancer and survivors of cancer, as well as the cost of cancer care on the health system.^{5, 6, 7, 8, 9}

Despite this initial research, there is a need for a transformative demonstration project to show the

impact of supportive cancer care across different types of care centers in partnership with community-based organizations. This project can help to advocate for policies, regulations, and funding to advance supportive cancer care by states and the federal government. This demonstration project should leverage existing and new third-party data to highlight the multifaceted benefits of supportive cancer care. It should demonstrate how such care not only improves quality of life but also extends survivorship. Moreover, it should provide additional evidence that supportive cancer care can lead to significant cost reductions in the healthcare system. By presenting this data-driven project, we can make a compelling argument for the necessity and value of reimbursement models for supportive cancer care.

The Road Ahead

Elevating supportive care at the federal level and building capacity for sustainable state-level collaboratives among care facilities, community-based organizations, insurers, and employers on supportive cancer care will test and further demonstrate the impact of a supportive cancer care approach.

Leveraging national data and fostering strong collaborations at the state level among healthcare facilities, community organizations, insurers, and employers will serve as a platform to examine and further validate the effectiveness of the supportive cancer care approach by illustrating its impact and potential benefits.

³ Razvan Andrei Popescu et al., Supportive Care: Low Cost, High Value. *Am Soc Clin Oncol Educ Book* 41, 240-250(2021).DOI:10.1200/EDBK_320041

⁴ Scotté F, Taylor A, Davies A. Supportive Care: The “Keystone” of Modern Oncology Practice. *Cancers (Basel)*. 2023 Jul 29;15(15):3860. doi: 10.3390/cancers15153860. PMID: 37568675; PMCID: PMC10417474.

⁵ Scotté F, Taylor A, Davies A. Supportive Care: The “Keystone” of Modern Oncology Practice. *Cancers (Basel)*. 2023 Jul 29;15(15):3860. doi: 10.3390/cancers15153860. PMID: 37568675; PMCID: PMC10417474.

⁶ Jean S. Edward et al., Coverage and Cost-of-Care Links: Addressing Financial Toxicity Among Patients With Hematologic Cancer and Their Caregivers. *JCO Oncol Pract* 19, e696-e705(2023).

⁷ Razvan Andrei Popescu et al., Supportive Care: Low Cost, High Value. *Am Soc Clin Oncol Educ Book* 41, 240-250(2021).DOI:10.1200/EDBK_320041

⁸ Accenture on behalf of City of Hope, Quantification of Value Department of Supportive Care Medicine Creates, Available upon request.

⁹ Berman R, Davies A, Cooksley T, Gralla R, Carter L, Darlington E, Scotté F, Higham C. Supportive Care: An Indispensable Component of Modern Oncology. *Clin Oncol (R Coll Radiol)*. 2020 Nov;32(11):781-788. doi: 10.1016/j.clon.2020.07.020. Epub 2020 Aug 16. PMID: 32814649; PMCID: PMC7428722.

Identify and engage states where there is an opportunity to test and evaluate successful supportive cancer care models through cross-sector collaboration.

The Together for Supportive Cancer Care Coalition will identify and share successful program models that can be adapted by smaller, multi-sector state coalitions. This will involve identifying and engaging states where there is an opportunity to test the supportive cancer care approach through cross-sector collaboration. The Together for Supportive Cancer Care Coalition can then support evaluating the approach in the state and expanding its reach, eventually advocating for adoption in other states by showcasing the positive impact of the model. State models should include pilots for public and private insurance to cover the cost of supportive cancer care. These pilot programs provide valuable research that can be used to inform future policy decisions.



Educate key audiences about the positive impacts of the supportive care approach on quality of life, outcomes, and higher-value, lower-cost care over the long term, and advocate for adoption in other states.

As part of this approach, the Coalition will synthesize and share existing research that demonstrates the proven benefits of supportive cancer care to further support these education efforts.

Advocate for a public analysis summarizing studies on the impacts of supportive cancer care, including reducing overall healthcare costs.

This analysis could provide policymakers needed data on the effectiveness of the supportive cancer care approach, further strengthening policy proposals.

Advocacy Spotlight: Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) Model for Dementia

An example of a national model is the GUIDE model, which works to improve quality of life for people with dementia and lessen the strain on those who care for them without pay. The model incorporates care coordination and care management support, caregiver education and resources, and respite services. The new model, which launches in July of 2024, was established through cross-sector collaboration led by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

3

Increasing Employer Understanding of and Commitment to Supportive Cancer Care, Working in Partnership to Support Employees

The Challenge

Employers can play a key role in driving access to supportive cancer care and need to be more fully engaged as integrated partners in cross-sector

advocacy for supportive care.

By offering supportive cancer care, employers demonstrate their commitment to the well-being of their staff—whether people living with cancer, survivors,

or caregivers. Supportive cancer care can help employees with cancer to manage their illness more effectively, maintaining a better quality of life; additionally, employees are more likely to continue to contribute to their jobs, which also benefits employers. Furthermore, evidence shows that the cost of hospital care decreases when supportive care services are offered early and throughout treatment, and those lower costs will be reflected over time for the employer and the employee. In essence, by supporting employees through their cancer journey, employers are investing in their most valuable asset, helping them to live fuller, healthier lives, and in turn, strengthening the organization as a whole.

While some employers have expanded benefits relating to oncology care, there must be a greater understanding of what employees are facing on their cancer journeys—including difficulty coordinating care because of a lack of a cohesive model for support.

Employers have the potential to be powerful advocates for supportive cancer care due to their influence over insurance coverage, their direct communication with employees who may be diagnosed with cancer or care for a person with

cancer, and their ability to advocate for supportive care policies. Therefore, it is crucial to equip employers with the knowledge and tools that they need to advocate for supportive cancer care benefits and coverage.

The Road Ahead

Employers can serve as a key advocate for increasing equitable access to supportive cancer care to better support their employees who may be living with cancer, survivors, or caregivers.

The coalition will launch a program to engage employers as advocates for access to supportive cancer care. This initiative will guide employers in understanding the benefits of supportive care for companies and their employees, evaluating their current policies, and advocating for improved coverage options. By participating and becoming vocal champions of supportive cancer care, employers can use their influence to amplify the demand for better coverage and services within their organizations and broader industries.

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