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High Percentage of Melanoma Survivors Experience Significant Financial Burden

Over Half of Study Participants Point to Health Insurance and Money as Top Concern

CHICAGO, IL - (June 3, 2017) - The Cancer Support Community (CSC) announced today the results of its study of melanoma patients as part of its Cancer Experience Registry, at the 2017 ASCO (American Society of Clinical Oncology) Annual Meeting. The study explored 1) the financial impact of melanoma and its relationship to cancer-related distress, and 2) survivors' experiences discussing financial burden with their health care team.

The top concern reported by participants was around issues related to health insurance and money worries, with over two-thirds (69 percent) reporting that they were moderately to very seriously concerned about insurance and financial matters. In exploring more deeply the impact of costs of care on quality of life and treatment adherence, the study shows that:

- 57% depleted their savings
- 20% borrowed against or used retirement money
- 17% postponed filling prescriptions
- 13% skipped medicine dosages at least sometimes

Also of note, financial impact was associated with an increase in overall distress for those with income less than \$60,000.

Forty-two percent of respondents expressed a desire for financial assistance. However, only 28 percent reported that their health care team spoke to them about cost of care, and only 28 percent were asked about financial distress.

"The impact of the financial burden experience because of a melanoma diagnosis cannot be overstated," commented CSC President Linda House. "Financial counseling may minimize the financial burden of melanoma, which, in turn, can potentially improve the patient's quality of life, medical adherence, and overall health outcomes."

CSC Senior VP of Research & Training Joanne S. Buzaglo added, "These results are crystal clear to me. It is imperative for all people involved in the care and treatment of melanoma patients to support the development and evaluation of interventions to enhance doctor-patient communication about the cost of care, and connect patients with resources that can help."

The full poster <http://bit.ly/2rKiZVI> and the abstract <http://bit.ly/2qFxiEd> as presented at the 2017 ASCO Annual Meeting Symposium is available online.

About the Cancer Support Community

As the largest professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, the Cancer Support Community (CSC) is dedicated to ensuring that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action, and sustained by community. CSC achieves its mission through three areas: direct service delivery, research, and advocacy. The organization includes an international network of Affiliates that offer the highest quality social and emotional support for people impacted by cancer, as well as a community of support available online and over the phone. The Research and Training Institute conducts cutting-edge psychosocial, behavioral, and survivorship research. CSC furthers its focus on patient advocacy through its Cancer Policy Institute, informing public policy in Washington, D.C. and across the nation. In 2016, the CSC network delivered nearly \$45 million in free services to patients and families. For more information, please call the toll-free Cancer Support Helpline at 888-793-9355, or visit www.CancerSupportCommunity.org. *So that no one faces cancer alone*®

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