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**Out-of-Pocket Costs for Health Care Remain Top Concern for Many,
Despite Advances in Reform.**

Cancer Support Community Project Explores Patient Access to Health Care

WASHINGTON – (March 19, 2015) – A report released today by the Cancer Support Community, an international nonprofit, found that despite advances in health care reform, out-of-pocket costs for health care remain a top concern for many people living with cancer.

Patients were asked in a survey and also through interviews about their experience with health care today. The survey focused on the following areas: satisfaction with insurance, access to providers (including scheduling availability, time and discussions with these providers), access to services and concerns around the direct costs of cancer and its care.

The study, “An Insight Into Patient Access to Care in Cancer,” found that, despite advances made in health care reform, nearly 50 percent report paying more for health care over the past 12 months, and out-of-pocket medical costs remain a top concern for many. Regardless of whether respondents indicated that they liked or did not like their health insurance, the top three concerns were out-of-pocket costs for premiums, co-insurance, and co-pays for medications. Specifically, among those who responded they did not like their coverage, 58 percent had concerns about their premiums, 67 percent had concerns about their coinsurance and 54 percent had concerns about copay costs for medications. Furthermore, two in five patients said they were seriously or very seriously concerned about potentially bankrupting their family with medical costs.

Additionally, 71 percent reported not receiving social and emotional support services during their cancer experience, which could have prevented some trade-off decisions, such as skipping doses of medications or missing medical appointments.

“People are making decisions like consumers in a situation where the clinical stakes and the potential suffering of patients is substantial,” said John D. Sprandio, Sr., MD, a specialist in hematology and oncology in Philadelphia, Pa.

“In general, health care reform is working well for some, and not as well for others. In patients for whom it is working well, there are still bumps in the road,” said Kim Thiboldeaux, CEO of the Cancer Support Community. “While the Affordable Care Act has brought health care access

to people with preexisting conditions, such as cancer, who were previously denied coverage, there is still work to be done to ensure high-quality, affordable care for all people with cancer.”

The full report can be found [here](#), and the video is available online [here](#).

About the Cancer Support Community

The mission of the Cancer Support Community (CSC) is to ensure that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action and sustained by community. In 2009, The Wellness Community and Gilda’s Club joined forces to become the Cancer Support Community. The combined organization, with more than 50 years of collective experience, provides the highest quality social and emotional support for people impacted by cancer through a network of more than 50 licensed Affiliates, more than 120 satellite locations and vibrant online and telephone communities, touching more than one million people each year.

Backed by evidence that the best cancer care includes social and emotional support, the Cancer Support Community offers these services free of charge to men, women and children with any type or stage of cancer, and to their loved ones. As the largest professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, the Cancer Support Community delivers a comprehensive menu of personalized and essential services including support groups, educational workshops, exercise, art and nutrition classes and social activities for the entire family. Through cutting-edge psychosocial, behavioral and survivorship research, the Cancer Support Community’s *Research and Training Institute* is helping CSC change the future of cancer care through education and training. The Cancer Support Community’s *Cancer Policy Institute* ensures that the voices of 13.7 million cancer survivors and their families are heard in the nation’s capital and state and local legislatures across the country. In 2014, the CSC network delivered nearly \$46 million in free services to patients and families. The Cancer Support Community is advancing the innovations that are becoming the standard in complete cancer care. So that no one faces cancer alone®.

For more information, please visit www.CancerSupportCommunity.org

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