**REMOVING BARRIERS THROUGH TREATMENT ASSISTANCE**

**THE PROBLEM**

After an individual is diagnosed with breast cancer, the goal is for them to receive treatment to combat the disease. They receive orders from doctors to have life-saving procedures and medications to take. Even with insurance coverage, the out-of-pocket cost for initial treatment can be more than $5,000.00, which is five times more than what the average American has in their savings account (Huddleston). The reality is­­, some cannot afford bus fair or a tank of gas to get to their scheduled procedures. Some cannot afford to pay for all the medications or the co-pays to pick them up from the pharmacy. Time lost at work is another burden as those who are undergoing treatment may not be able to continue working and do not have another source of income. The graphic to the right shows data from a survey of treatment assistance recipients, demonstrating the extremes that some individuals go to save money during treatment, and why financial assistance such as this, is integral in reducing breast cancer deaths.



**THE COST OF CARE**

Patients face many financial issues. More than 92% of patients receiving treatment assistance have insurance coverage, but the aid that insurance provides is often not enough. A survey of more than 3,000 breast cancer patients reported the following.

**CARE ALTERING SAVINGS**

38% Postponed or did not fill drug prescriptions

34% Skipped doses

31% Halved medications

30% Ordered medications online from sources outside the U.S.

**CO-PAYS AND VISITS**

29% of patients skipped doctor appointments to save costs

**TREATMENT PLANS**

25% of patients under the age of 64, reported their care team never took their personal financial situation into consideration during treatment planning

**MAKING ENDS MEET**

33% of patients reported decreasing expenses such as groceries and transportation

21% missed a utility bill

17% missed a rent or mortgage payment

**OUR APPROACH**

Susan G. Komen knows that financial stress is a reality for many battling breast cancer. That is why we started a financial assistance fund for individuals called the Komen Treatment Assistance Fund. Our goal is to help those who are facing financial challenges by providing limited financial assistance, education, and support services to low-income, underinsured or uninsured women across the country. While treatment and care will be the primary cost associated with breast cancer, there are other indirect costs which can keep a patient from receiving the care they need.

***“The help provided was a lifeline at a very crucial time.”***

 ***“Your assistance took some of my financial burden off my mind while I was recovering from surgery and adjusting to treatments.”***

***“When I called, I was afraid and at my wits end. I didn’t know what would be my next step. The agent was very calm and knowledgeable and pointed me in the right direction. When the call was done, I was at ease and knew exactly the next steps to take.”***

For those that are eligible, funding aids recipients with the costs of treatment, transportation, child and elder care, home care, medical equipment, wigs, and protheses. Of the thousands of people who receive treatment assistance funds, 85% of those recipients use funding to help pay for transportation to and from treatment. By reducing the financial burden, we hope that more patients will be able to make it to all their life-saving procedures and can take all their prescribed medications. The Komen Treatment Assistance Fund reduces barriers to care for patients and ultimately, aids in improving outcomes. This is one way that Susan G. Komen will be able to reach our Bold Goal in reducing the number of breast cancer deaths in the U.S. by 50% by 2026 because more people will receive the care they need to battle this disease.

**Use of Funds**

**85% used funds on transportation**

**15% used funds on medical expenses**

