

New Survey Shows Transportation Challenges During Breast Cancer Treatment

The Pink Fund Transportation Survey 2019

Summary: The cost of healthcare and its increasing burden being placed upon the individual has been well documented by our past Pink Fund surveys of breast cancer patients. We've become so accustomed to the cost of care being a barrier to healthcare access, we are no longer shocked to see our (fully insured) friends and loved ones skipping treatment or resorting to setting up GoFundMe to cover medical costs.

The Pink Fund's past surveys have reflected both the crushing long term financial impact of breast cancer treatment, as well as the health care compromises patients are willing to make in an attempt to manage costs.

With The Pink Fund mission to address the financial barriers for breast cancer patients and ensure the best health outcomes, we needed to take a deeper dive into transportation costs and their impact on healthcare access for breast cancer patients.

Transportation is the second largest spending category for the typical U.S. family, mirroring The Pink Fund expense payments made on behalf of our recipients (car payments, car insurance). Our goal is to gain a better understanding of transportation issues facing breast cancer patients so we are in the best possible position to affect change.

Key Findings of The Pink Fund Transportation Survey 2019*

- Nearly eight hundred breast cancer patients completed the survey - 93% are in active treatment for breast cancer.

Distance and time spent traveling to receive treatment

- 70% of those polled travel between 10 and 50 miles to treatment facility.
- Close to 20% travel even further - up to 100 miles to receive treatment.
- 60% of those traveling to treatment, spend up to 30 minutes in the car.
- 40% spend up to an hour.

Access and cost of transportation to treatment

- Nearly half (48%) of the patients surveyed say the cost of transportation is a barrier to receiving treatment.
- Close to 60% missed an appointment or have been late to an appointment because of transportation issues.
- A quarter of respondents in treatment use some type of transportation service to get to treatment, and 32% of this group say cost is a big issue.
- Close to 50% drive themselves in their own vehicle.
- 41% rely on a friend or family member's vehicle.
- 67% of respondents say they are in need of transportation assistance to/from treatment.
- 80% would need a ride service to treatment 3 times or more each month.

*results as of 10.16.19

An Overview of The Pink Fund and Its Mission

- A breast cancer diagnosis can destroy the financial health and well-being of the patient and his/her family. This phenomenon has been identified as Financial Toxicity.
- While in active treatment, many patients are unable to work - and many experience a loss of income that can result in catastrophic financial losses and the need to rebuild financial health.
- The Pink Fund provides short-term financial support to help meet basic needs, decrease stress levels and allow breast cancer patients to focus on healing while improving survivorship outcomes.
- The Pink Fund provides approved applicants with a 90-day grant that covers non-medical, cost-of-living expenses, such as health insurance premiums, housing, transportation and utilities. Payments are made to the creditors directly, not the grant recipient.
- To date, The Pink Fund has paid out more than \$3 million.

Breast Cancer and Financial Toxicity

- 62% of Americans have less than a \$1000 in savings
- 21% of Americans do not even have a savings account
- 50% of bankruptcies are the result of illness or illness related job loss

This survey's findings clearly indicate that breast cancer patients face multiple challenges when it comes to fighting cancer, not the least of which is a financial one.

The Pink Fund will remain true to its mission of raising awareness of this "financial toxicity" so that families eventually facing a cancer diagnosis will be better prepared to deal with the financial impact.