



The Cost of Cancer: Key Facts & Figures



The reasons for rising health care costs are complex, but the impact on patients is real. As we tackle the issue of rising costs during our discussion, keep these key facts and figures in mind.



Patient Costs

- Cancer patients pay **\$5.6 billion** each year in out-of-pocket costs for cancer treatment according to *The Costs of Cancer*, a 2020 report from ACS CAN.
- A 2019 report in *the Journal of American Medicine* found that 44 percent of cancer patients **deplete their life savings** and 62 percent go into debt.
- One in three cancer survivors reported “**job lock**” for their household because of their cancer diagnosis according to a *JAMA Oncology* study and in 2015, Americans lost **\$94 billion** in earnings because of a cancer diagnosis.



Prescription Costs

- Patients are more likely to let prescriptions go unfilled when they face out-of-pocket costs. According to a recent study in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, one-third of patients abandoned prescriptions when facing a **\$200-\$500 out-of-pocket cost**.
- The National Cancer Institute estimates that a patient’s out-of-pocket costs can be up to **\$12,000 per year** for certain drugs.



Stress & Anxiety

- An ACS CAN survey conducted in 2018 found that **51 percent** of patients reported struggles with **anxiety or depression**.
- A majority of cancer patients want to talk to their doctor about costs, but only **27 percent** of patients and less than half of oncologists report having had a **discussion about cost** according to a survey from the National Cancer Institute.



Policy Changes

ACS CAN is committed to advancing evidence-based public policies that support patients and their families during the cancer journey.

- Patients should have access to insurance coverage that is adequate, affordable and easy to understand.
- All Ohioans should have access to no-cost prevention and early detection services, which are proven to reduce costs.
- Reduce out-of-pocket costs that patients face at the pharmacy, including allowing copay assistance programs to count toward a patient’s deductible.

For more information on 2021 policy priorities, contact Bryan.Hannon@cancer.org