

Community-Based Cancer Care

The Best Choice for High Quality, Cost-Effective Care



Tremendous advances are being made every day in the fight against cancer. Unfortunately, many promising treatments are very costly, placing patients under enormous financial pressure that threatens their ability to achieve optimal outcomes. Financial anxiety is very common in cancer patients as they deal with treatment costs that can be overwhelming:

- More than 30% of patients with advanced cancer rated financial worries as more severe than physical, family and emotional concerns¹
- Cancer patients are three times more likely to file bankruptcy than people without cancer²
- Out-of-pocket expenditures for newly diagnosed cancer patients relying on Medicare alone can average as much as 24% of household income³

Even Insured Cancer Patients Struggle To Afford Treatment

While insurance helps provide access to quality care, insured patients still experience financial challenges. A recent study of insured cancer patients found 29% reported high to overwhelming financial distress.⁴ Another study of insured patients who requested copayment assistance demonstrated that many patients alter their care to defray out-of-pocket expenses:⁵

- 20% took less than the prescribed medication
- 19% partially filled prescriptions
- 24% avoided filling prescriptions altogether
- 46% reduced spending on food and clothing
- 46% used savings for out-of-pocket expenses
- 42% percent viewed their cancer care as a catastrophic financial burden

Cancer patients treated in hospitals are 28% more likely to visit an emergency department (ED) than those treated in community-based cancer centers, incurring additional treatment costs.⁶

Reduce Your Patients' Treatment Costs While Ensuring High Quality Care

The financial burden on cancer patients can dramatically influence quality of life and outcomes. To reduce treatment costs as much as possible, it is crucial for patients to receive cost-effective care without sacrificing quality. Today many hospital outpatient departments (HOPDs) offer cancer care services similar to those provided by community-based cancer centers, but unfortunately for patients and payers, HOPDs charge much more than independent cancer facilities while delivering equivalent outcomes.⁶ For instance, **in a hospital setting, chemotherapy can cost nearly 60% more than community-based care and physician costs can be as much as 300% higher, yet the outcomes are equal.⁷**

While some of the extra cost may be covered by payers, patients also carry much of this burden. By referring your patients to a community-based cancer center, they are more likely to receive cost-effective, high-quality cancer care that does not needlessly drive up treatment costs.



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Southern Cancer Center is an affiliate of The US Oncology Network, united with more than 1,400 independent physicians dedicated to delivering value-based, integrated care for patients — close to home.

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A Better Value for Patients and Payers



Multiple research studies over the last several years have consistently shown community-based cancer care costs significantly less than care provided in hospital outpatient departments:

- The Milliman report concluded **HOPD costs were 28% to 53% higher** than care provided in a physician’s office. The study “noted significantly higher per-episode cost for chemotherapy drugs, radiation oncology, imaging (CT, MRI and PET scans) and laboratory services.”⁸
- The Avalere Health study found chemotherapy costs per episode of care were **\$6,800 higher in the hospital setting** versus the independent cancer center. Radiation costs were also higher in the HOPD for episode payments to Medicare, with a difference of \$3,097 for prostate IMRT, \$600 for breast 3D-CRT and \$430 for lung 3D-CRT.⁹
- The Leavitt Partners review of 10 studies on the cost of treating cancer concluded that, despite variations in data sets and methodologies, all 10 studies showed the cost of treating cancer in the HOPD was, on average, **38% higher than in the community oncology setting**.¹⁰

A large comprehensive study by Xcenda published in late 2017 is worth closer examination. The study included 6,675 patients diagnosed with breast, lung or colorectal cancer between July 1, 2010, and June 30, 2015, who received chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and/or surgery in a hospital setting or community practice.

Once again, the results demonstrated the high value of community-based care: “Across all cancers, the mean total cost paid per month was significantly lower in patients who were treated in a community-based practice compared with those who were treated in a hospital-owned practice,” with a difference of \$12,548 vs \$20,060.¹¹

Community-Based Care Provides Many Benefits Beyond Cost

While treatment costs are critical, there are other factors to consider when it comes to cancer care. Cancer patients are extremely vulnerable and need a high level of support and personalized care that hospitals simply cannot provide. Unlike hospitals, community cancer centers are designed for one purpose only—to help cancer patients beat their disease. For convenient access to advanced therapies, technologies and personalized care from a staff patients know and trust, community cancer centers are the right choice.

Xcenda Study Results <i>Per Patient Per Month Total Costs¹²</i>		
	Community Practice N=4,450	Hospital-Based Practice N=2,225
Mean Total Costs	\$12,548	\$20,060
Total Medical Costs	\$12,103	\$19,471
Chemotherapy	\$4,933	\$8,443
Physician Visits	\$765	\$3,316
Radiation	\$1,095	\$1,430
Inpatient	\$1,178	\$1,498
ED Visits	\$121	\$168
Outpatient	\$3,838	\$3,912
Other	\$174	\$704
Total Pharmacy Costs	\$445	\$589



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