Summit Health Foundation
WellSpan

Providing Help and Hope in a Time of Need

Oncology Bridge Fund

The Oncology Bridge Fund, established by the Summit Health Foundation, provides financial assistance for cancer patients in need who live in Franklin County and neighboring communities.

Cancer patients face so much more than just their diagnosis. Patients often deal with:

- Loss of a job or insurance.
- Difficulty paying high cost co-pays and medications.
- Missed paychecks due to sickness.
- Reduced job hours for caregiver spouses.

When Roger was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2023, life changed overnight for him and his wife Betty.

"Everything was new and very scary. We were just trying to process and absorb the diagnosis," said Betty. But right away, they had to start planning for his treatment at WellSpan. Because the cancer had metastasized to Roger's bones, they didn't have any time to waste.

Immediately, Roger began a course of chemotherapy infusions and radiation. Suddenly, Roger and Betty needed to make trips from their home in Breezewood to appointments in Chambersburg several days a week — a drive that could cost up to $20 in gas for each round trip. With their fixed income and facing mounting bills and expenses, they weren't sure how they were going to make it work. Through the support of dedicated WellSpan team members, Roger and Betty were connected with the **Oncology Bridge Fund**.

> "It was hard to think about anything besides Roger's diagnosis, let alone, wow, we've got 10 trips to the hospital in the next two weeks. Help from the Oncology Bridge Fund was a very welcome surprise and we very much appreciated having this support. You really don't think about having cancer a lot unless it's happening to you or someone you know, and you don't know what help is out there unless someone points you in that direction. It was very welcome. We feel very blessed.
>
> – **Betty**, A grateful wife

The past few months have been difficult for Roger and Betty, but they are both hopeful about his continued treatment at WellSpan.

The gas cards they received relieved the stress and worry about how they would manage to get to and from the many appointments Roger has had lately.

Assistance from the **Oncology Bridge Fund** has helped ease some of Roger and Betty's worries and helped them focus on his treatment and healing. Through this program, they were eligible for $25 gas cards for Roger's 10-day-long stretches of radiation appointments. They also received financial support for their electric bill.

Research shows a patient's ability to heal is significantly affected by the stability of their environment.

Gifts to the **Oncology Bridge Fund** make a direct and immediate impact on patients and their loved ones, like Roger and Betty, who are struggling with basic needs as they undergo cancer treatments.

- A $50 donation provides gift cards to help patients and their families with grocery bills.
- A gift of $75 provides financial assistance for monthly utility bills to ensure a safe, stable environment for our patients.
- A contribution of $100 provides 25 bus rides or four $25 gas cards to help patients get to and from their doctor appointments.

Every penny of every gift is directed locally to help cancer patients and their families in Franklin County and neighboring counties, allowing them to focus on their health and treatments.

The impact in 2024

This special source of funding is supported entirely through the generosity of our donors. Funding offers vital assistance for WellSpan's most vulnerable patients with support for basic needs, such as food security, shelter and utilities, transportation, and medication assistance. For patients, this fund can be a lifeline for them and their family.

The **Oncology Bridge Fund** provided more than **$50,000** of support to help **49 patients** in our community relieve their financial burdens so they could focus on fighting cancer.

Unfortunately, due to funding constraints, there was a short period during which patients did not receive any financial support. The demand for patient support continues to grow, and our ability to provide assistance is currently limited by the availability of funds.

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For more information about the **Summit Health Foundation** and other vital community programs, please contact:

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