

## Patient Assistance Program helps cancer patients in need.



*LRCP's Patient Assistance Program enables patients to buy needed supplies such as wigs.*

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**London, Ont.** – The London Regional Cancer Program at London Health Sciences Centre is marking the fifth anniversary of its Patient Assistance Program which helps adult cancer patients in Southwestern Ontario who have a financial burden as a result of their cancer treatment.

The Patient Assistance Program acts as a single point of access to two distinct funds established at LRCP: the Massel-Cruikshank Breast Cancer Patient Assistance Fund and the Gene Goodreau Patient Assistance Fund. Both funds are intended to provide emergency, short-term payment for items when all other funding sources are exhausted.

“This is a program that not only has real impact to the patient, but is practical and meaningful too. The simple act of covering nutrition beverages for the month can leave the biggest impression for a patient and make their journey to recovery that much better,” explains Brian Orr, regional vice-president for Cancer Services.

A 2006 research study confirmed that the financial burden for cancer patients ranged between \$200 to more than \$500 per month, depending on employee benefit packages or health insurance they may have.

“The impact isn’t to patients alone, as their caregivers also take time off work to care for their sick family member. This can further decrease a household’s income at a time when they need it most,” says Tina Plat-Dekoter, social worker at LRCP.

“I was told the LRCP Patient Assistance Fund might be able to pay for my hotel stay while my husband was undergoing treatment. Your generosity is unbelievable. My whole family thanks you so much,” says Nancy Renaud whose husband Frank was undergoing treatment at LRCP.

Some of the items covered include but are not limited to wigs, prostheses, mastectomy bras, childcare during treatment, special nutrition supplements, respite care, medicine and transportation when Canadian Cancer Society driver volunteers are not available.

“For some people, the Patient Assistance Fund can be the difference between getting or skipping treatment because of out-of-pocket costs,” explains Plat-Dekoter. “I have seen patients not show up because they simply could not afford the transportation.”

Cancer patients who are being treated at affiliated regional sites of LRCP, London Health Sciences Centre and St. Joseph’s Health Care, London are eligible to apply. A two-page application form is all that is required to help assess the patient’s needs and start the process.

[Find out how you can donate and support these funds.](#)

[See a video about the Gene Goodreau Patient Assistance Fund.](#)

[Read more at the Chatham Daily News](#)

[Visit the LHSC website for applications to the Patient Assistance Program.](#)