



spotlight on health

Financial Support For Drug Prescriptions

(NAPSA)—After dealing with the shock of a blood cancer diagnosis, many patients and their families are overwhelmed by the second shock wave—the spiraling costs of paying for the drugs.

Many cancer patients with health insurance to cover the treatment costs can still find it terribly hard to pay for the remaining charges.

Learning in January that James Buehler, 76, had acute myelogenous leukemia, a blood cancer that starts in the bone marrow, was terrifying for him and his wife, Josephine, 74. Now the couple find themselves struggling daily with the difficulties posed by a cancer diagnosis. Fearful of driving themselves from their suburban home into the city for his chemotherapy sessions, they are constantly trying to figure out who will be able to take them. They have to manage the side effects he suffers from the chemotherapy. And even with Medicare coverage, they wonder how they will pay the bills for the treatments.

“One of the medicines had an outrageous cost,” said Josephine. “More than \$1,200 for 24 pills.”

Like many others who are touched by a blood cancer, the Buehlers turned to The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society for help. The Society, the world’s largest voluntary health organization dedicated to funding research for blood cancer, also provides critical education and support services for patients.

Now the Society has a new program to help patients and their families who have difficulty coping with the costs of cancer treatment.

The Society will provide support for prescription drug co-pays and health insurance premiums for patients who meet certain

income requirements. Patients with private insurance and Medicare beneficiaries under Medicare part B and/or Medicare Part D, Medicare Supplemental Health Insurance or Medicare Advantage are eligible if they meet the income requirements.

Americans diagnosed with blood cancer should know they can turn to The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society for help paying for treatment.



“This program has been very helpful,” said Josephine. “Every little bit that we can get is a big help.”

Diane Sager, 68, has been struggling with the debilitating effects of her chemotherapy, which forced her to give up her part-time temp job, making the payments for her treatments that much more onerous.

“I’m very grateful for this program,” she said. “It’s helping me pay for my co-pays and it’s wonderful.”

The new program is currently available only to patients with myeloma, lymphoma and acute myelogenous leukemia, but the Society hopes to add new disease categories soon.

“Receiving a diagnosis of a blood cancer is overwhelming and that devastating news can be compounded by an inability to afford the treatments,” said Dwayne Howell, the Society’s president and CEO. “The Society is trying to do what it can to help alleviate this burden for the patients that it serves.”

Information on the program is available at www.lls.org/copay or 877-LLS-COPAY.