

Letter to the Editor: Road to Recovery Volunteers are Sought

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Dear Editor,

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death and disease in the U.S., with roughly 1.76 million new cases expected to be diagnosed by year end of 2019.

The impact of cancer not only takes an enormous toll on the health of patients and survivors, but also places a tremendous financial impact on many families. The costs of cancer treatment have a number of direct and indirect expenses associated with it.

Transportation is one of the most significant contributing factors to these escalating indirect costs. As healthcare leader here in Madison County at OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center, Alton Memorial Hospital, and Anderson Hospital, we have seen cancer patients' treatments delayed due to lack of transportation.

Many patients don't own a vehicle, can't afford gas, or are unable to access the publically available transportation system in the region. In many instances, patients, quite often our family members and friends, may be too ill or elderly to drive. Gaps in transportation often lead cancer patients unable to get to their scheduled treatments and appointments.

Even with leading oncology physicians and cancer treatment options here in the Riverbend, the transportation needs of our patient scan often lead treatment plans to be ineffective due to timing and scheduling.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) of Madison County is urgently seeking volunteer drivers willing to donate their passenger seat to transport cancer patients to and from their cancer-related treatments through the "Road To Recovery" program. As board members of the American Cancer Society of Madison County, we can vouch for the fact that volunteering is made easy and training is free.

The ability to impact and help our fellow residents here in the Riverbend is extremely rewarding and makes a tremendous impact. Finding dedicated volunteers who can help with this program is crucial to its success in helping cancer patients in our community without transportation.

If any of your readers would be willing to volunteer for the American Cancer Society's "Road To Recovery" program, or know someone who might, please call (800) 227-2345 or visit cancer.org/drivefor for information on how to participate in this essential program.

Sincerely,

Ajay Pathak, Dave Braasch, Keith Page, President & CEO
OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center, Alton Memorial Hospital and Anderson Hospital.

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