



ALLIANCE TO ADVANCE PATIENT-CENTERED CANCER CARE

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

An estimated 1.7 MILLION PEOPLE are newly diagnosed with cancer each year in the United States, and the number is projected to grow as the population ages.¹

Despite advances in cancer diagnosis and treatment, access to high-quality cancer care continues to be challenging for some patients in the United States, especially those in vulnerable and underserved communities.

In response to this unmet need, the [Merck Foundation](#) (the Foundation) established the [Alliance to Advance Patient-Centered Cancer Care](#) (the Alliance) in 2017. The Alliance is a multi-site initiative that aims to increase timely access to patient-centered care and reduce disparities in cancer care for vulnerable and underserved populations in the United States.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, BALTIMORE, MD

Improving Cancer Care for the Underserved in Academic and Community Practice Settings

As a member of the Alliance, the [Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine](#) (JHSM), working through the [Johns Hopkins Clinical Research Network](#) (JHCRN), will collaborate with other Johns Hopkins organizations and its community partners to improve health outcomes and reduce cancer health care disparities for underserved communities.

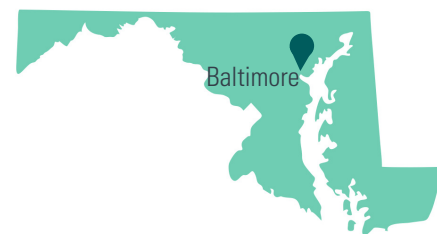
The key partners will be the [Johns Hopkins Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Care Center](#), [Johns Hopkins Center to Reduce Cancer Disparities](#) and the Alliance Community Advisory Group.

Through these partnerships, the JHSM will develop and implement interventions that improve cancer care coordination and communication between patients and health care teams. The interventions will also increase patient engagement and access to support services.

Focusing on Underserved Communities

The JHCRN serves a geographic area comprised of over 8 million people from racially and ethnically diverse communities across the mid-Atlantic region. This service area includes urban and rural communities known to experience unequal access to cancer care services (known as cancer health disparities).

Many of the underserved populations in these areas are older African-Americans (60 years of age or older), and individuals who live in areas found to have increased cancer mortality. The most commonly diagnosed cancers among this group are breast, lung, prostate and colorectal cancer.



Patient-centered care: Providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs and values, and ensures that patient values guide all clinical decisions.²

Increasing Access to High-Quality Cancer Care

Our Intervention Approach

Enhance patient engagement in care

- Implement web-based, communication training programs – for patients, health care providers, and family members and friends serving as care partners – to better engage patients in their own care planning and treatment decision making
- Train care partners on techniques to become effective health coaches who can support patients through the entire cancer care process
- Establish an electronic database of available community support programs to increase awareness of available services for cancer patients and their care partners

Improve coordination of cancer care services

- Develop and implement an electronic health record (EHR) system to coordinate the transition of care from cancer centers to primary care providers when cancer treatment ends

- Implement a cancer patient navigation training program for community health workers and nurse navigation teams to reduce barriers experienced by underserved and vulnerable populations
- Expand development of a cancer care transition program for primary care sites using EHR-based tools

Ensure community engagement and dissemination of program results

- Create a regional cancer care presence by expanding the Community Advisory Groups presently in place in Baltimore City and Prince George's County, Maryland
- Establish a working group to develop plans to better communicate with patients, health care providers and community groups, and to disseminate best practices and lessons learned through the program

Advancing Best Practices in Patient-Centered Cancer Care

The JHSM plans to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs to improve cancer care for the underserved in academic and community practice settings in the mid-Atlantic region. In addition, the Alliance will create a learning collaborative among program partners to share insights from the programs and help identify and promote best practices in patient-centered cancer care that can improve patient outcomes and reduce disparities in care.

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2. Committee on Quality of Health Care in America. Institute of Medicine. *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2001.