



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Nonprofit in Michigan Provides Cancer Medication at No Cost to Patients in Need

Ann Arbor, MI – We all know that access to life-saving medication is critical for patients with cancer. Though many could never imagine the challenges that cancer clinicians, including pharmacists, face daily when caring for patients who can't afford the high-cost prescriptions they need, while other patients who have leftover prescriptions of the same medications have only one option - to throw them away.

Patients and providers in Michigan now have a nonprofit startup tackling these challenges on their behalf. YesRx, a 501(c)(3) organization, is removing barriers to medication access for vulnerable and underserved people and communities. The organization operates the YesRx Network, an interconnected system of healthcare sites and facilities collecting donated cancer medications and providing the donated medications *at no cost* to patients in need. The YesRx Network launched in July 2023, and already has several members.

Michigan is one of 13 states with a Public Health Code defining the Cancer Drug Repository (CDR) Program that allows donations of eligible cancer medications to be used by another individual who meets the eligibility criteria listed in the Code. In Michigan, this enables residents to donate their own or a family member's unused cancer medication, which, per the Code, can be provided at little (up to \$5) to no cost to a patient in need with the same prescription.

YesRx believes the CDR Program is a viable solution for the high cost of new cancer medications that are reaching an average of \$300,000 per year, according to the most recent data on cancer trends. Simultaneously, this solution transforms the use of leftover cancer medication at a time when the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is reporting cancer medications valued in the billions are being thrown away each year.

"Cancer care teams work tirelessly to provide optimal experiences for their patients while facing insurmountable challenges," Dr. Andrew Shuman, a cancer surgeon and medical ethicist remarked. "I am excited by the work YesRx is committed to doing. Increasing cancer medication access by creating a Statewide network will save expensive prescriptions that would otherwise be thrown away and provide them to patients who need these medications."

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YesRx is carrying forward the work of pharmacists who established the first CDR Programs in the State at MyMichigan Health in Midland, Munson Healthcare Regional Cancer Network in Munson, and the Cancer and Hematology Centers in Grand Rapids. These programs took the crucial first steps to explore how medications could be collected and identified the resources required for the donated medication to reach patients in need. Due to the amount of medication collected in an extremely short time, they quickly discovered they needed help to continue. The legacy of their work and the partnership with these pharmacists provides a solid foundation for the YesRx Network to build upon.

The launch of the YesRx Network is supported by the collaborative strength of statewide quality initiatives, including the Michigan Oncology Quality Consortium (MOQC), Michigan Institute for Care Management and Transformation (MICMT) and Pharmacists Optimizing Oncology Care Excellence in Michigan (POEM). MOQC is a physician-led, voluntary effort of medical and gynecologic oncologists working together since 2009 to improve the quality and value of cancer care in Michigan. MICMT partners with primary and specialty care practices in Michigan to improve the quality and experience of patient care with care management programs. POEM integrates clinical oncology pharmacists in direct care to help patients at high-risk have better outcomes. YesRx is honored to offer solutions that directly benefit patients alongside these change makers in cancer care.

YesRx is actively raising funds required to carry out this important work to provide access to cancer medication at no cost by seeking sponsorships from healthcare groups and companies, applying for nonprofit grants, and offering donation opportunities for individuals on the yesrx.org website.

About YesRx: Founded in June 2023, YesRx is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit committed to empowering partners in health care in a sustainable ecosystem of improving medication access and eliminating medication waste. The organization is headquartered in Ann Arbor, MI and led by a team of clinical and business leaders focused on solving healthcare disparities and improving patient outcomes. Membership in the YesRx Network is free to medical practices and facilities where cancer care is being provided. More information can be found on the yesrx.org website or via email at hello@yesrx.org.

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