



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Nonprofit Improving Medication Access for Patients with Cancer in Michigan**

YesRx is a charitable service organization working on behalf of patients with cancer to help with medication access and medication waste. YesRx launched their efforts in June 2023 with enthusiastic support from patients, caregivers, and clinicians who navigate the barriers related to expensive cancer medications and the devastating effects.

Two big problems YesRx is helping solve are cancer medication access and waste. Recently published studies captured shocking statistics. Patients with cancer who have pharmacy co-pays that are \$500 or more are 4x more likely to not start or continue their cancer treatment than patients who have co-pays of \$100 or less. Patients receiving oral cancer medication who have a single prescription change during treatment results in an average of \$4,300 worth of medication being wasted.

YesRx supports cancer care providers across Michigan in the utilization of Public Act 416 of 2006 which established the Cancer Drug Repository (CDR) Program. This Michigan law allows patients to donate eligible unused and unopened cancer medication and provides clinicians with access to medication that can be provided to a patient in need. YesRx connects and supports CDRs in Michigan through the YesRx Network. Currently consisting of 14 CDR programs and growing, the Network is designed to reach people and communities across the state. Michiganders have already generously donated cancer medications valued in the millions that clinicians have been able to provide to patients in need at no cost.

The strategic expansion of the YesRx Network resources is occurring with mission-aligned organizations. YesRx has received initial funding through Trinity Health Michigan and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM). YesRx is thrilled to have Trinity Health Michigan as the founding health system organization and the Michigan Oncology Quality Consortium (MOQC) and Pharmacists Optimizing Excellence in Oncology (POEM) whose funding is provided by Blue Cross as part of the BCBSM Value Partnerships program as the founding Network sponsor. "At Trinity Health Michigan, our Core Values include stewardship and a commitment to those experiencing poverty," said Rosalie Tocco-Bradley, PhD, MD, MHSA, chief clinical officer at Trinity Health Michigan. "That is why we are so delighted to partner with YesRx, so that we can better serve Michigan communities by providing oral cancer medications to patients who otherwise would not have access to affordable, life-saving treatments."

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Trinity Health Michigan's support establishes the infrastructure needed for the first State-wide CDR location at Trinity Health Pharmacy - Reichert Center. Medications donated by patients across the state are safely stored and dispensed to clinicians under strict pharmacy practices and CDR guidelines at this location.

"We joined the YesRx mission to be co-creators in a system for sustaining affordable access to cancer treatment in our state," Dr. Katie Beekman shared. "This is a much-needed solution that patients, clinicians, cancer care advocates, and policy makers all support because by design it demonstrates the ability to reduce the amount of unused and wasted cancer medications while improving access to treatment for patients in need." Dr. Beekman's Trinity Health IHA Hematology Oncology Medical Group is a founding member of the YesRx Network.

The MOQC/POEM support through BCBSM provides funding that enables YesRx to provide the resources needed to support CDRs in oncology practices to YesRx Network members at no cost. Members choose to participate in the YesRx Network because they believe CDRs can positively impact the quality of patient care.

"We are pleased to see the advent of a system in Michigan that helps facilitate improving medication access to those in need while at the same time eliminating medication waste," said Martha Walsh, MD, MHSA, senior medical director and associate chief medical officer for Provider Engagement at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. "Through this innovative model, patients and their families are able to donate medications that they may not be able to use. Cancer patients will have enhanced access to medications they need, and increasingly these expensive medications will not be wasted. We applaud YesRx Network for their efforts."

**About YesRx:** YesRx is a 501(c)(3) committed to empowering partners in health care in a sustainable ecosystem of improving medication access and eliminating medication waste. More information can be found on the [yesrx.org](https://www.yesrx.org) website.

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