

Taking on Healthcare Disparities

LLS stands for equal treatment, equal opportunities, and equal rights for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), people with disabilities, Hispanics and Latinx, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, veterans, women, and other underrepresented groups.

Our mission must reflect the communities we serve and we are looking at all our services through that lens in order to help ensure patients have equitable access to healthcare.

We are taking a holistic,
THOUGHTFUL APPROACH
to ensure our work helps to address health disparities

We currently have
PROGRAMS
in place across research, advocacy and patient services to address health disparities

We want to do more and are
SEEKING
to work with donors, foundations, government and other partners to fund expansion of existing programs or add new ones

Here are some ways we are helping now and programs we want to implement in the future:

IMPACT Grants (Influential Medicine Providing Access to Clinical Trials)

We are launching a **new initiative to help more minorities gain access to clinical trials** in community-based healthcare settings as well as provide clinical trial education for physicians at the community sites. There are complex barriers to participation in clinical trials, especially among minority and rural populations. The grants will be awarded to major cancer centers that will develop networks of trial sites in community-based healthcare centers. **LLS is eager to collaborate with lead donors and co-funders to activate the first three projects: Mayo Clinic Rochester-MN, Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Weill Cornell Medicine Meyer Cancer Center.**

Myeloma Link

In 2017, we launched **Myeloma Link, to directly connect Black communities to free myeloma information and support**. The initiative, carried out by staff and volunteers, is currently offered in 13 communities in different areas of the U.S. To date it has reached **close to 30,000 individuals through more than 250 educational programs and community outreach events** in partnership with churches, community centers and healthcare settings. The aim of these programs is to raise awareness among community members and primary care providers about the prevalence of myeloma among Black communities and provide information and resources to individuals with myeloma. **We are now expanding Myeloma Link** to educate residents and healthcare providers in these 13 communities about the signs, symptoms and treatments of all the blood cancers and the resources available.

Spanish Resources

We have translated the LLS website, where many patients and caregiver access our resources in Spanish. Spanish-speaking patients and caregivers can access nutritional information, financial assistance, and other informational materials as they navigate diagnosis and survivorship.

Help Primary Care Providers Who Serve Minorities to Communicate with Patients About Cancer Clinical Trials

Building on considerable published pilot research, we are evaluating the effectiveness of an **innovative online course** about cancer clinical trials for primary care providers, with a particular **emphasis on those who treat patients who are underrepresented in clinical trials including racial/ethnic minorities, young adults and the elderly, those of low-socioeconomic status, and those in rural areas.** The objectives of the one-hour, interactive online training are to **educate primary care providers** about cancer clinical trials, **emphasize their role** as a gateway for patient access to trials, encourage these providers to **refer patients to cancer care centers that offer trials,** and **give them practical strategies** to help their patients ask their oncologist about clinical trials.

Patient Assistance Programs

Our **Urgent Need Program**, in partnership with Moppie's Love, **Co-Pay Assistance Program**, and **Susan Lang Pay-It-Forward Patient Travel Assistance**, provide financial assistance for underserved patients. We're excited that we've **been able to expand Urgent Need to adult blood cancer patients** in partnership with Charlie's Fund.

Equity in Access Research

"Equity in Access" is a research program under development, that will advance study of the underlying causes of inequitable access to care and identify policies, strategies, and interventions to effect change.

Cost of Cancer Care

Our Office of Public Policy, working in Washington, D.C. and state capitals across the country, is committed to addressing the inequities that are pervasive in healthcare. One of the ways of achieving that is by **ensuring all patients have access to affordable, quality cancer treatment.** That is why **LLS champions policies that reduce the cost of cancer care and bring insurance coverage to more people.** However, more challenges remain, and we must address both the structural racism that persists in healthcare and the political systems that support it.

An Expanded Agenda

OPP is **pursuing a policy agenda** that leaves no stone unturned in the **fight for equity in healthcare.** That includes making sure every patient has access to clinical trials; preventing discrimination against cancer patients on the basis of race, color and other factors; and ensuring robust data collection in healthcare that allows us to better understand our progress in addressing racism—and the work that remains. We are also **doing our part to be part of the solution** by looking inward and developing strategies to **elevate the voices of patient-advocates of color.**