



Patient and Caregiver Oncology Quality Council (POQC)  
Michigan Oncology Quality Consortium  
April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Dear Dr. Tipirneni and Ms. Braddix,

On behalf of the Patient and Caregiver Oncology Quality Council (POQC) of the Michigan Oncology Quality Consortium, we are pleased to provide this letter of strong support for your proposal, *"Cancer Care and Social Needs Referrals: Connecting Communities and Resources Pragmatic Trial (CANCER CARE CONNECT)"*, being submitted to the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). As a council composed of patients and caregivers from across Michigan, we are enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to research that directly addresses the real-world challenges faced by people navigating cancer care.

POQC was established to ensure that the voices and lived experiences of patients and caregivers meaningfully inform efforts to improve cancer care across Michigan. Members of the council represent diverse experiences with cancer diagnosis, treatment, survivorship, and caregiving, and we work closely with clinicians and researchers through MOQC to shape initiatives that improve the quality, accessibility, and patient-centeredness of oncology care. Our role is to help ensure that projects reflect the priorities and needs of patients and families, and to provide feedback on programs, resources, and quality improvement initiatives that affect the cancer care experience.

POQC members have already been engaged with MSFIELD and the study team in discussions about the proposed *CANCER CARE CONNECT* study and have provided input on the study design and proposed outcomes. We were particularly encouraged by the study's focus on evaluating multiple approaches to connecting patients with resources that address social needs. From the patient and caregiver perspective, it is essential to recognize that individuals experiencing cancer are not all the same, patients and their caregivers face different barriers related to transportation, finances, caregiving responsibilities, and access to community resources, and those needs may evolve over the course of a cancer treatment plan. Studying more than one referral approach will help generate valuable evidence about which strategies work best for different patients, caregivers, and communities.

Our council strongly believes that research like this is critical for improving the cancer care experience. Patients and caregivers frequently encounter social and financial challenges that can affect their ability to attend appointments, adhere to treatment, and manage the many practical aspects of cancer care. Members of POQC have consistently highlighted the importance of ensuring that healthcare teams recognize these challenges and have effective systems in place to connect patients and caregivers with the support they need.

If funded, POQC looks forward to continuing to work closely with the study team throughout the project. Council members will provide ongoing input on implementation considerations, patient/caregiver-facing materials, and interpretation of study



findings to help ensure that results reflect the experiences and priorities of patients and caregivers. We also welcome and appreciate the opportunity to help share study information findings with patient and caregiver communities and share our voices in the development of resources that support patients and caregivers navigating cancer care.

In summary, POQC strongly supports the *CANCER CARE CONNECT* study and believes it represents an important opportunity to strengthen the systems that help patients access both cancer treatment and the social supports that make treatment possible. We are enthusiastic about continuing to contribute the perspectives of patients and caregivers to ensure that this research remains grounded in the real experiences of those most affected.

Thank you for the opportunity to partner on this important work.

Sincerely,

Tamera Allison	Steve Clark	Elise Harris	Laura Liz Lambdin	Jacob Sierocki
Janet Behmlander	Diane Drago	Mark Harris	Erika Lojko	Terrence Smith
Jerry Behmlander	Llewellyn Drong	Mike Harrison	Ayman Mustafa	Margot Stallard
Tracey Cargill-Smith	Christina Dubois	Sharon Kim	Marcie Paul	Germaine Swanson
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