

Help when cancer strikes

angel
foundation

Fall 2017

angel Insider

Radiation

child care

Lodging

At-Home Care

Imaging
Scans

SURGERY

The Hidden Costs of Cancer

co-pays

TRANSPORTATION

Doctor Visits

Hospital
Stays

LAB
TESTS

lost
wages



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Letter from the President

Hi Everyone,

It's my favorite time of year here in Minnesota— crisp, cool nights, still a bit of warm sun and the leaves beginning to change color. It's a great time to reflect on the summer months and share what's happened with Angel since our Spring newsletter.



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1 In May, we welcomed Megan Gooselaw to our staff as Community Philanthropy Manager. Megan is responsible for helping community members raise vital funds on behalf of Angel. You will see a story later in the newsletter about Chloe and Maggie, two local 9th graders who have raised over \$3,000 for us through their Out Run Cancer fundraiser.

2 Their spirit of giving back is a joy to see, and we hope you will consider planning your own event for 2018. Megan is available for anything from brainstorming ideas to helping you with details, so please reach out to her at mgooselaw@mnangel.org. We also have a helpful new toolkit on our website to get you started.



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3 In August, we completed our 12th season of Camp Angel. We welcomed 130 kids this summer, which is more kids than we have ever had at camp! Surrounded by others who have shared similar experiences, we blend things both silly and serious, providing children with opportunities for meaningful discussions, balanced by the chance to just be a kid. Campers tell us it is an unforgettable experience.

4 Lastly, I hope you will read the article "The Hidden Costs of Cancer." These are expenses that can feel overwhelming as medical bills begin to arrive, like gas to drive to chemotherapy or childcare during medical appointments. At Angel Foundation, we know a cancer diagnosis can mean more than just a struggle with your health. That is why we focus our Emergency Financial Assistance program on the non-medical needs of local adults with cancer. Our grants provide a bit of breathing room for families at a critical moment.

In many ways, you are written into the stories of this edition because your partnership allows Angel to create a world of support that helps families with cancer find moments of joy. Without your generosity, our mission would not be possible. Please continue to spread the word about our services, as we know word-of-mouth is a key component in building awareness of our programs. Thank you for being a fellow Angel.

Warmly,



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Community Fundraiser Spotlight

While some teenage girls are thinking about shopping, movies or music, 9th graders Maggie Randall and Chloe Swanson are thinking about how to help people who have cancer... and have been doing so since 5th grade. These two philanthropic, kind-hearted young women care deeply about their community and have taken it upon themselves to do something to help local families dealing with a cancer diagnosis.

Their story began when Chloe and Maggie were in fifth grade—before the two girls had even met. That year, Chloe was busy organizing a charity run to benefit local cancer patients. At the same time, Maggie first learned about Angel Foundation through a class presentation and wanted to get more involved. When the girls met in sixth grade, they discovered their mutual passion for helping others. Now close friends, Chloe and Maggie decided to combine their efforts and organize a charity run to benefit Angel Foundation. Forming a lasting partnership that carries on to this day, they now host a yearly event they named Out-Run Cancer.

"This event has shown me what we can do as young people. It has shown us how we can make a difference."

—Maggie Randall

"Putting yourself out there is the hardest part, but you can do it. The things you do may seem small to you, but they are significant to other people."

—Chloe Swanson



Maggie (left) is an aspiring pediatric oncologist. Chloe (right) plans to go into medical research with hopes of finding new cures and treatments for diseases.

Out-Run Cancer is held at Lake Cornelia each spring. The event is a fun-run and has a more relaxed format than traditional runs for charity. Participants are encouraged to come when they can, hopefully donate to Angel, and are welcome to run, jog or walk. The girls greet the participants when they arrive and even provide water bottles and granola bars after the run.

Both agree that the most rewarding part about their event is seeing how much money is raised and knowing that the proceeds will go to someone who may need a helping hand. Maggie and Chloe will celebrate Out-Run Cancer's four-year anniversary in 2018.



Save the Date!

Tuesday, March 6
5-8 pm

1620 Central Ave. NE
#150
Minneapolis

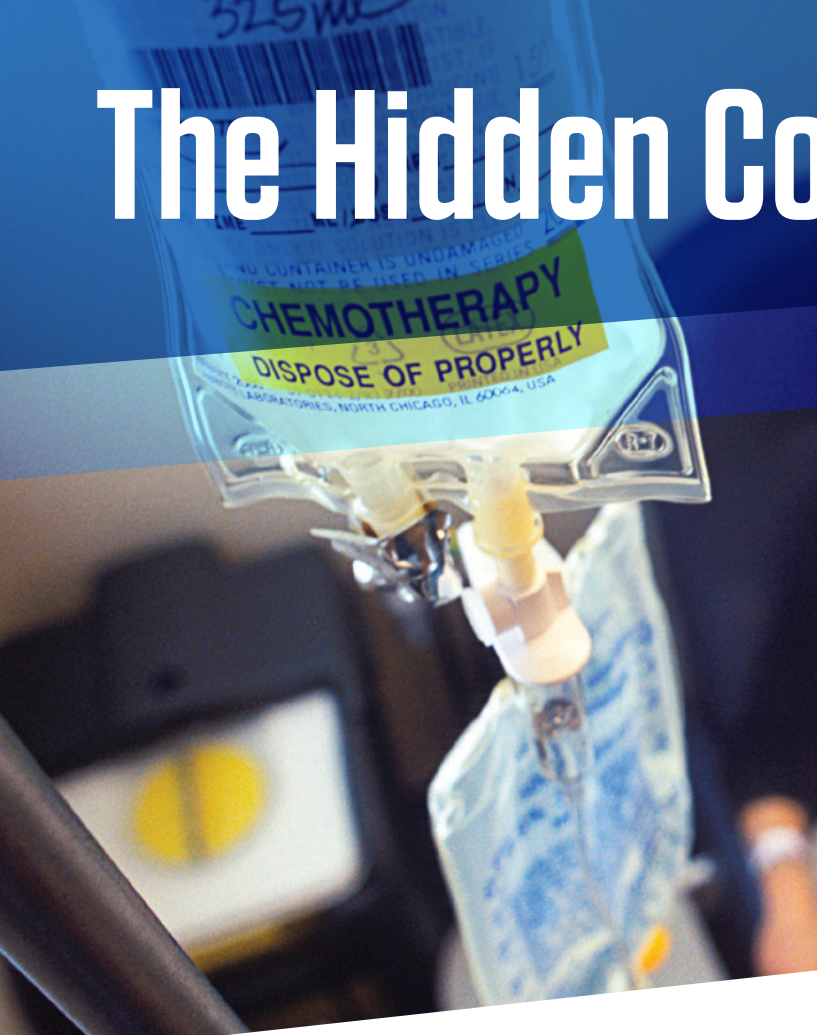
HN | US
TATTERSALL
distilling

Angel Foundation is excited to be partnering with Minneapolis-based creative agency, **Superhuman**, on marketing and branding strategy. With their help, we hope to further secure our spot in the non-profit cancer community as a leader in the field, recognized locally for our unique programming and reaching more of those who need our help.

Superhuman has significantly discounted their services, making it possible for Angel to accomplish phase one, the results of which will be revealed in early 2018. We cannot thank them enough for their support and look forward to long-term collaboration.

 **SUPERHUMAN**
STRATEGY + DESIGN + CREATIVE

The Hidden Costs of Cancer



At Angel Foundation, we often talk about the devastating financial effects of a cancer diagnosis, but what does that really mean?

Some expenses might be more obvious than others: select newer cancer medications can cost \$10,000 per month, with the out-of-pocket expense varying by the type of insurance coverage. There are also provider and facility fees to worry about when visiting the clinic for treatment or the hospital for surgery. Not to mention there are additional medications to combat nausea and other side-effects of treatment, imaging scans like X-rays and MRIs, lab tests and, in some cases, at-home care and equipment.

That is a lot for anyone to deal with. However, many people fail to think about the “hidden costs” of cancer. Gasoline and parking expenses increase when a patient needs to travel for radiation therapy every day. New costs may be added to the budget, like childcare every time a patient visits the clinic for hours of chemotherapy or lodging for those who must travel long distances for their care. Dietary needs change and expensive supplements like Boost and Ensure are another added expense.

At the same time, the demands of treatment often cause patients to miss work or quit their jobs, which means lost wages. All of this adds up to a severe financial burden, making it harder to pay for the other basic expenses of day-to-day life.

Angel Foundation recently reached out to Thomas Flynn, MD, retired oncologist with Minnesota Oncology and our former Board Chair, to better understand this problem that physicians have termed “financial toxicity.”



“As oncologists, we are often less aware of the financial difficulties our patients are facing and only hear about a small number. Our focus is on providing the best treatment, but of course we know about the out-of-pocket cost for chemo and other treatments. This problem is increasing because more specialized medications are being developed and utilized. More and more, these targeted therapies are oral medications that are only covered by pharmacy benefits and have high co-pays that fall under the patient’s responsibility.”

Cancer's Costly Burden

While often effective, these expensive treatments take a toll. A recent survey by the American Cancer Society showed that one-quarter of cancer patients in the United States delay getting a test or treatment because they cannot afford it. Another study published in *The Oncologist* reported similar findings: one-quarter of patients surveyed had chosen to leave a prescription unfilled due to cost, and nearly 20-percent filled only part of a prescription or took less than the prescribed amount. When we asked Dr. Flynn about his own experience, he said while it was not frequent, he did recall several patients who did not pursue treatment or were erratic in keeping appointments because they couldn't afford care. Tom also shared that studies by the American Society of Clinical Oncology have shown that financial distress, emotional symptoms and overall distress in cancer patients are interrelated.

"Fortunately, in our practice, we had financial counselors and social workers. We would ask them to work with the patient and explore possibilities to get coverage for treatment, medications at reduced cost or find assistance through organizations like Angel Foundation."

Understanding that financial distress can negatively impact physical recovery and well-being, Angel Foundation's Emergency Financial Assistance program is designed to help cover some of those hidden costs of cancer. These grants are a life-line for patients: oftentimes preventing utility shut-offs and housing evictions; providing fuel for patients unable to travel to treatment; or helping buy groceries for patients and their families. The program has also been helpful for families in ways other than meeting financial obligations. In a recent survey of our program participants, almost 80% of respondents reported that working with Angel Foundation had improved their emotional well-being, something which many described as extremely important for working through their diagnosis. Many specifically attributed the reduced stress to alleviated financial strain.

"I was unable to work for 5 months while going through cancer treatment. The financial assistance allowed me and my family to breathe a bit easier and I was able to concentrate on healing." — Respondent

At Angel Foundation, we understand that cancer's impact on a patient is not just physical in nature. It is life-changing: emotionally, physically and financially. While we cannot treat the physical illness, we focus on the emotional and financial side by providing families with education and therapeutic support (through the Facing Cancer Together program) and help with those hidden costs of cancer by offering financial aid for non-medical basic needs. Due to the support from our local community of individuals and organizations, Angel Foundation has been able to provide financial grants to more than 15,000 adults with cancer and, with Facing Cancer Together activities, help thousands of families through the difficult cancer experience. Together, we truly are making a difference when cancer strikes.



29,000

Projected number of new cancer cases diagnosed in Minnesota in 2017.



1 in 5

Families facing cancer have trouble paying day-to-day bills.



25%

of patients have put off treatment or tests due to cost.



2.5

times more likely to declare bankruptcy if you have cancer.



\$703

average monthly out-of-pocket expense for clinic copays, prescriptions and other medical costs.



40%

of patients fall below the poverty line at some point during treatment— even those with health insurance.



1 in 4

patients do not fill prescriptions due to cost. To save money, **20%** take less than prescribed.



Additional expense of time lost from work varies from patient to patient, but adds to the overall cost of cancer care.



Sources: American Cancer Society; ACS Cancer Action Network; American Society of Clinical Oncology; Duke University; Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center; National Cancer Institute; *The Oncologist*; Washington National Institute for Wellness Solutions.

A Special Thank You

This year, Angel Foundation was honored to be one of two local nonprofits chosen to receive Quality of Life grant funding from Humor to Fight the Tumor Foundation. A long-time supporter of Angel Foundation, Humor to Fight the Tumor has granted more than \$100,000 to our Emergency Financial Assistance program over the years, allowing us to provide critical financial support to hundreds of brain cancer patients in our community.

Founded by Joelle Syverson, a cancer survivor diagnosed in 2001 with a non-curable, recurring brain tumor, Humor to Fight the Tumor is dedicated to funding research and patient services that improve the lives of brain tumor patients. They raise funds by hosting the annual Humor to Fight the Tumor gala that increases awareness, offers support and encouragement, and provides a sense of community and hope to local individuals facing cancer.

Joelle is a firm believer that laughter is the best medicine. "By weaving laughter into the event, my hope was not only to raise funds and awareness, but to create an uplifting evening that would send the message that, whether you have cancer or not, every day is a gift and blessings can come out of adversity."

Angel Foundation certainly feels blessed by our partnership with Humor to Fight the Tumor Foundation. With the help of this year's \$18,000 grant, we will be able to assist an additional 28 brain cancer patients receiving treatment in the Twin Cities. Thank you, Humor to Fight the Tumor, for helping Angel make a difference when cancer strikes.



Save the Date!

angel
gala
2018

January 13, 2018

5 - 11 p.m.

Hilton Minneapolis

We hope you will join us for an incredible evening of hope, survivorship and support for adults with cancer and their families. Ticket information coming soon!



Community Spotlight



This spring, our volunteer coordinator was contacted by two third-year students of the University of Minnesota’s Department of Pharmacology PhD program. **Paige Smith** and **Mariya Shapovalova** had recently taken on coordinating community outreach opportunities for fellow students in their program and were interested in volunteering for Camp Angel after learning of the program through a web search. Inspired to get out of the lab, where both are conducting cancer research, they wanted to make a human connection to the disease.

“I really wanted to do something to give back to families that have been affected by cancer,” Paige recently shared. “When I heard about Camp Angel, I thought this was the perfect opportunity to not only provide support for these families, but also help teach kids about what to expect post-cancer diagnosis.”

Mariya reflected a similar sentiment. “We work on understanding and curing cancer, but volunteering at Camp Angel [would remind] us a little extra why our work is needed.”

Paige and Mariya attended the Camp Angel Luncheon in May, where they learned more about camp and its positive impact on local families. Hooked by what they heard at the luncheon, they were ready to commit and recruit more students to get involved



In the end, five students from their program volunteered for the June session of Camp Angel. Hallie Hintz, Eric Lake and Abir Majumdar, in addition to Paige and Mariya, gave up 24 hours of required time in the lab to give back to the cancer community. The experience worked as intended: all left camp feeling motivated to continue their work.

“Volunteering with Camp Angel remind(ed) me why I go to lab every day and do the work that I do,” second-year student, Hallie Hintz, shared. “While we may not be at the bedside, I believe that the research we are doing will someday reach patients.”



Our volunteer community continues to humble us with their incredible service. We are so grateful to these students; not only for their time spent at Camp Angel, but for their larger contribution to the cancer community.



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Since 2001, Angel Foundation has served thousands of individuals and distributed over \$7M in emergency financial assistance to local adults with cancer and their families.

Mission Statement

Through an innovative and integrated approach of financial assistance, education and support, Angel Foundation helps adults with cancer and their families so that they may live life well with stability, strength and resilience.

Upcoming Events & Programs

Program Calendar



Education & Support Series
October 5, 12, 19 & 26, 5:30 – 8 p.m.
Abbott Northwestern Hospital
Minneapolis



Teen Outreach: Fall and Flannel
October 15,
2–5 p.m.
Severs Corn
Maze
Shakopee

Cupcake Wars
October 23, 5–6:30 p.m.
Angel Foundation
Mendota Heights

Parenting Through Cancer
November 8, 5:30–7:30 p.m.
Gilda’s Club Twin Cities
Minnetonka

Family Support Group – Living with Advanced Cancer
November 13, 6–7:30 p.m.
Brighter Days Grief Center
Eden Prairie

Teen Outreach: Give Back Month
November 16, 5:30–7 p.m.
The Open Door Pantry
Eagan

Events Calendar

Angel Gala
January 13, 5–11 p.m.
Hilton Minneapolis
Minneapolis



**Note the new date!*



Angel After Hours
March 6, 5–8 p.m.
Tattersall Distilling
Minneapolis

Camp Angel Luncheon
May 11, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
JW Marriott
Bloomington

