

# Advancing Equitable Caregiver Support Through Peer Navigation

## Translational Science Benefits Model IMPACT PROFILE

Connecting family caregivers with trained former caregivers who provide personalized support to reduce stress, ease isolation, and improve well-being.

### The Challenge

Family caregivers often feel overwhelmed, isolated, and unprepared as they support loved ones with serious illnesses. Without tailored guidance or emotional support—especially during crises like a new diagnosis or care transition—they face high stress, burnout, and poor health. Peer Caregiver Navigation (PCN) addresses this gap by connecting caregivers with trained peers who offer validation, guidance, and support grounded in shared experience.

### The Approach

To address the unmet psychosocial support needs of family caregivers, we developed Peer Caregiver Navigation (PCN) that:

- Pairs current caregivers with trained former caregivers for emotional, practical, and coping support.
- Offers individualized, culturally responsive, remote support at convenient times.
- Applies across the serious illness trajectory—from diagnosis to end-of-life.
- Requires no professional licensure, ensuring scalability and sustainability in various settings.
- Prioritizes diverse recruitment and training to reflect community diversity.

### The Impact

PCN will improve caregiver well-being by reducing stress, isolation, and burnout—especially among those from underserved communities who face barriers to support. By offering an accessible, non-clinical, and scalable model of support grounded in lived experience, this work can advance health equity, strengthen caregiver capacity, and reduce strain on healthcare systems. Ultimately, families, communities, and care providers will benefit from a more supported and resilient caregiving workforce.

## PROJECT POTENTIALS

- **Broader Accessibility:** PCN is delivered remotely by trained former caregivers, extending support to rural, underserved, and resource-limited communities.
- **Improved Caregiver Well-Being:** PCN reduces caregiver stress, isolation, and burnout, enhancing confidence and support in navigating serious illness.
- **Scalability and Sustainability:** PCN's non-clinical model allows health systems and organizations to expand support using volunteers, without requiring licensed professionals.

### Key Benefits

The Peer Caregiver Navigation project aims to deliver measurable **community, economic, and policy benefits**.



Community

**Community health services:** Expands community-based services, improving access to personalized, non-clinical support for caregivers across diverse settings.



Community

**Disease prevention & reduction:** Prevents depression, anxiety, and stress-related illness among caregivers, improving long-term health outcomes.



Community

**Health education resources:** Generates accessible, culturally responsive materials, enhancing caregiver knowledge and coping strategies.



Economic

**Cost savings:** Decreases unnecessary healthcare utilization, leading to potential cost savings for families and health systems.



Policy

**Policies:** Informs caregiver support policies and resource allocation, helping to institutionalize peer navigation as part of standard care.

### Acknowledgements:

This work was supported by generous funding from the National Institutes of Health, the Barnes-Jewish Hospital Foundation, the Hospice Foundation of the Ozarks, and the Goldfarb School of Nursing at BJC HealthCare. We are also deeply grateful to our community partners—including the Siteman Cancer Center, Alzheimer's Association, the American Cancer Society, Integrity Home Care and Hospice, BJC Hospice, and Memory Care Home Solutions—for their ongoing collaboration and support. The investigative team includes researchers and physician scientists from Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, and the University of Missouri.

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