LIVING BEYOND
BREAST CANCER®

2025 Community Needs Assessment Report

LBBC.ORG

Financial strain.
Stress and emotional health.
Quality of life.

> “Being a cancer patient feels like a full-time job.”
> —Survey respondent

Since Living Beyond Breast Cancer was founded 35 years ago, breast cancer research, treatment, and support have changed in many ways. We now know there are different types of breast cancer. New treatments, surgical options, and drug targets are available. And breast cancer awareness is rich with the voices and real-life experience of people with breast cancer.

What has not changed is the effect of breast cancer on people who are diagnosed. Since our start in 1991, LBBC has been grounded in the real stories of real people going through breast cancer, adjusting to life after active treatment, and thriving with metastatic disease. Supporting this community is at the heart of our mission.

We understand that breast cancer affects everyone differently. In 2025, LBBC asked our community where they needed the most help. We held small focus groups to learn more about needs that were not being met. Then, we surveyed the larger community to find out how deeply these areas were affecting people’s lives.

At a basic level, the survey revealed three top areas of need: financial strain, stress (particularly from interacting with healthcare and insurance systems), and need for emotional support for a better quality of life.

More than 1,000 people responded to our survey. Of those, 87% were people diagnosed with breast cancer. The rest were healthcare professionals and caregivers. Together, they clearly told us what would help the most: financial support and resources, ways to improve quality of life, and emotional support.

With this information, LBBC looks forward to taking our mission into the future. We will continue to provide trusted information around these needs and more opportunities for support through virtual and in-person connections.

You can help us get there. We hope you will join us.

Jean A. Sachs, MSS, MLSP
Chief Executive Officer

About the survey

Conducted June 2025 | 1,001 respondents

87% breast cancer diagnosis
11% work with people with breast cancer
8% caregivers
7% others

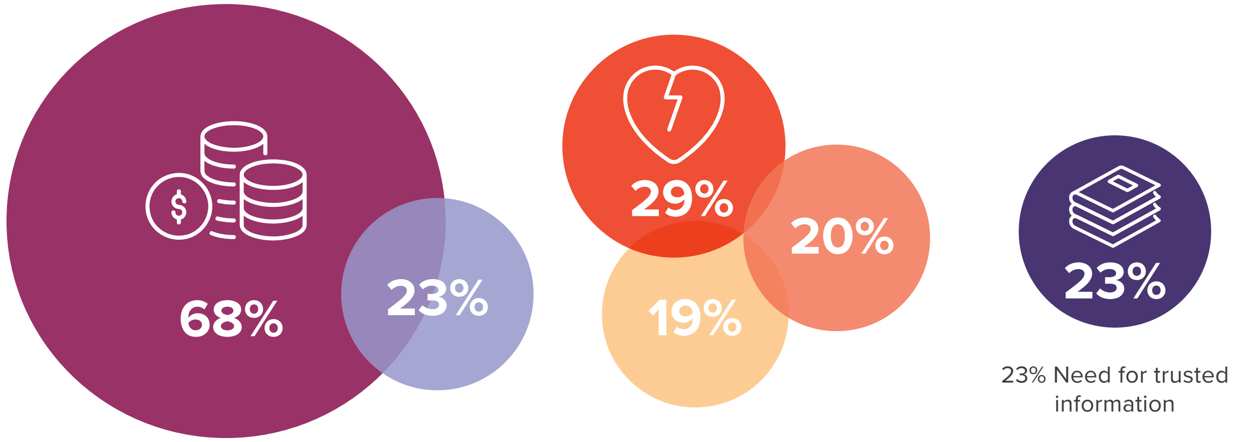
74% White
14% Black
6% Hispanic/Latino

69% urban/suburban (<30 miles from care)
16% rural (30-60 miles from care)
6% remote (>60 miles or requiring overnight travel)

LBBC’s 2025 Community Needs Assessment began with a central question:

What are the biggest needs that were not met in your breast cancer journey?

What people with breast cancer struggle with most



68% Financial strain
23% Cost of basic needs

29% Need for emotional support
20% Stress from health systems
19% Need for support groups

23% Need for trusted information

What people with breast cancer say would help the most

60% Financial support

57% Support for quality of life

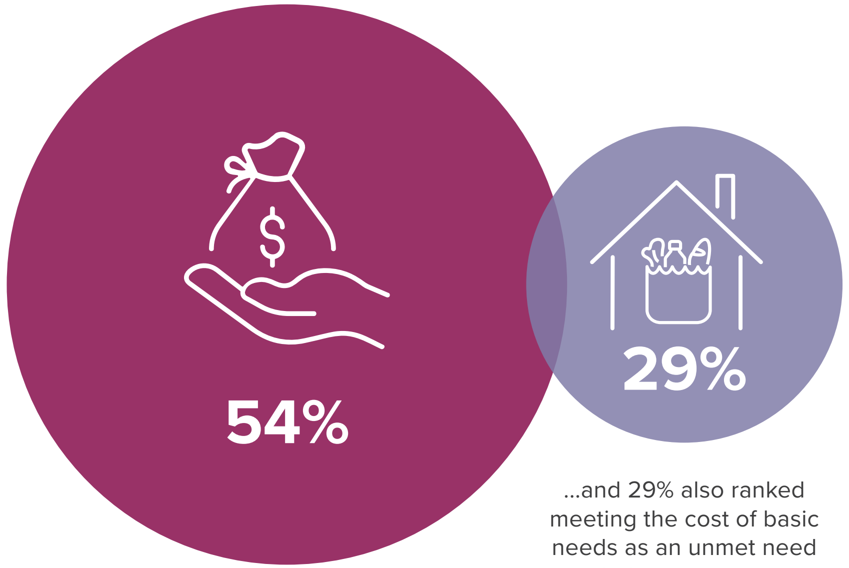
50% Emotional support

Financial strain, basic needs, and costs for supportive care

Based on our survey results, the financial burden of breast cancer is the single most urgent need. Beyond medical bills, many people struggle to afford the cost of basic needs like food and transportation. Add the cost of supportive services for side effects and wellness, and we see a fuller picture of serious overall financial strain.

The cost of breast cancer

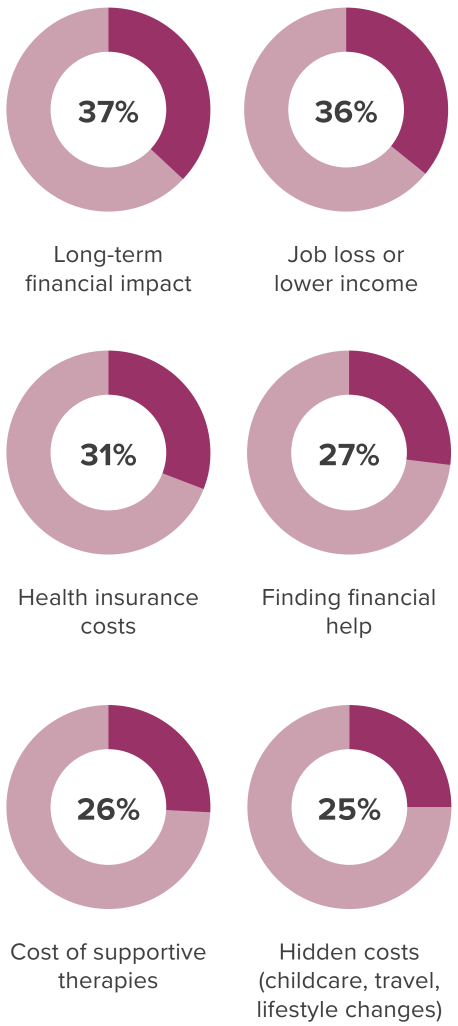
What has the most impact on your breast cancer experience?



...and 29% also ranked meeting the cost of basic needs as an unmet need with the most impact.

54% of respondents named financial strain as an unmet need...

Respondents said these specific challenges increased the strain of their financial burden:



> “I have guilt because I think about all the money I have cost my family.”
> —Survey respondent

As a community, we can take steps to support people with unmet financial needs.

Survey respondents suggested:

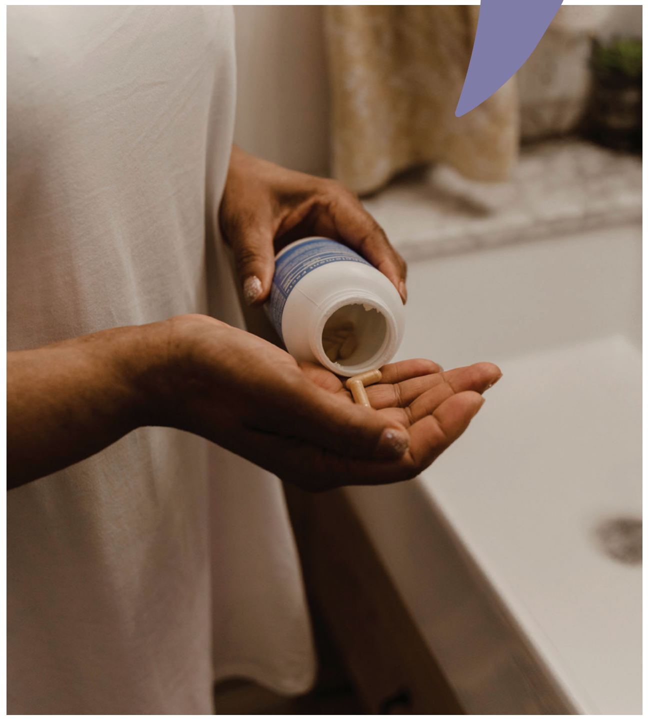
Talk openly about the financial burdens and cost of breast cancer care.

Share resources and direct financial help for food, transportation, housing, and childcare. These needs are ongoing through treatment, recovery, and living with metastatic disease.

Give easy-to-understand financial information in one place. This helps people with breast cancer with navigation, financial support, food and nutrition, and disability benefits.

Advocate for insurance coverage of side-effect treatments, wellness and supportive therapies, and other medical services like fertility care.

> “I went a couple months without my medication because I couldn’t afford it.”
> —Survey respondent



LBBC commitments

LBBC offers these programs and services to support the needs most important to our community:

Direct financial support from the LBBC Fund for basic living expenses to those in active treatment

Breast Cancer Helpline for peer-to-peer support and referrals to other resources

Education and information about financial planning, cost of care, workplace issues, and navigating health care

Education and information about income loss, working during treatment, legal rights for cancer patients, and eligibility for disability benefits

Sharing real stories of people facing stress from finances and interactions with health systems, along with lessons they’ve learned

Stress, emotional support, and connection

Breast cancer treatment is hard enough. But getting care adds another level of stress for people going through treatment and survivorship. Complicated healthcare and insurance systems take huge amounts of time and energy from patients, providers, and caregivers.

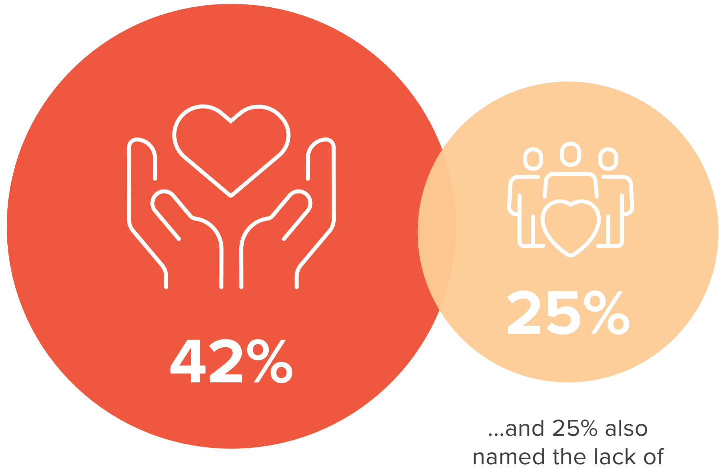
> "I don't have the energy to fight insurance things even when I know I should get it."
> —Survey respondent

Many people with breast cancer feel lost at different times. The initial shock of a diagnosis. The pressure to be OK after active treatment ends. The grief that comes with living with metastatic disease. Our survey shows a strong need for mental health and emotional support throughout all phases of managing breast cancer. Healthcare providers often don't have enough time to address emotional needs, and their patients may feel guilt over asking for help or pressure to be "OK."

Connecting with others in similar situations — people at the same phases of treatment and survivorship — is one of the best ways to get support and reduce stress.

Emotional strain and connection

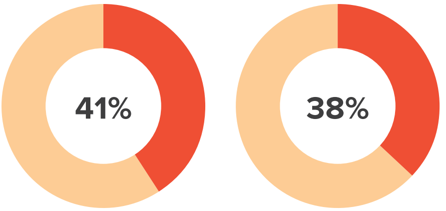
What has the most impact on your breast cancer experience?



42% of respondents named emotional support as having the most impact...

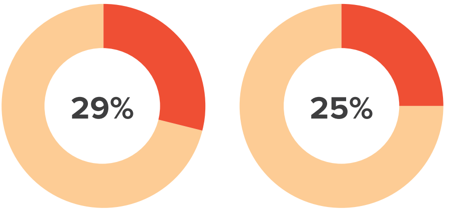
...and 25% also named the lack of access to groups in similar situations as an unmet need.

Respondents said these specific challenges contributed to their emotional health needs:



resources not offered directly by providers

reluctance to ask for help



no support after treatment

providers not aware of emotional needs

> "All your relationships change when you have cancer."
> —Survey respondent

Our community can offer ways to make stressful times easier.

Survey respondents suggested:

Create opportunities to connect with others by diagnosis, stage, subtype, or identity group

Offer affinity-based support where people can find guidance from other people in similar situations

Advocate for simpler insurance and health system processes, including referrals for mental health services

Emotional support resources and tools that are accessible in one place

LBBC commitments

To support the needs most important to our community, LBBC:

Gives clear, simple information about cancer patient legal rights, health insurance, health systems, and finances

Shares real stories about people who have navigated these systems, so people feel less alone

Offers guidance about life after primary treatment, reducing side effects, and living well

Educates stakeholders about the emotional needs of people with breast cancer

Provides peer-to-peer support via the Breast Cancer Helpline and closed online communities

Joins peer organizations to advocate for policies that improve access to care

Living better with the impact of breast cancer

While the primary goal of breast cancer treatment is to cure or control the cancer itself, people with breast cancer in our survey pointed to long-term quality of life after treatment as a significant need. Initial treatments and those intended to prevent recurrence or progression of disease are part of a long-term package deal. Side effects like early menopause, fatigue, brain fog, bone density and muscle loss, anxiety, disrupted sleep, and more affect survivors every day. The journey does not end with active treatment.

In fact, after financial support, services and programs that support wellness and palliative care, and that make the breast cancer experience easier, were the top solutions suggested by our survey respondents.

> “I wanted a roadmap for after treatment. It was like a support cliff.”
> —Survey respondent

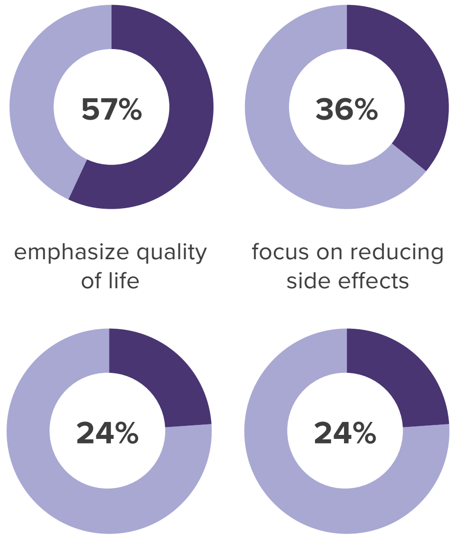
Quality of life

What has the most impact on your breast cancer experience?

23%

23% of respondents named the need for information that supports a better quality of life as an unmet need with the most impact.

Respondents said these resources would help meet the need for information and support a better quality of life:



emphasize quality of life — focus on reducing side effects

improve access to care — inform about auxiliary medical support

We can help improve quality of life for people with breast cancer with information and direct support.

Survey respondents suggested:

Create opportunities that allow patients to focus on their wellness

Offer easy-to-understand information and services to support quality of life for topics like nutrition, cognitive function, sex and intimacy, sleep, and other long-term impacts of treatment

Advocate for and inform the community about supportive therapies that help make the breast cancer experience easier

Advocate for low- or no-cost support services and therapies to manage stress

LBBC commitments

LBBC supports the long-term quality of life of people with breast cancer and their loved ones through:

Partnering with other organizations to highlight unique community needs and resources

Offering virtual support groups and in-person events to build connection

Sharing tools and information to navigate healthcare systems

Providing advocacy training and amplifying the lived experience of breast cancer

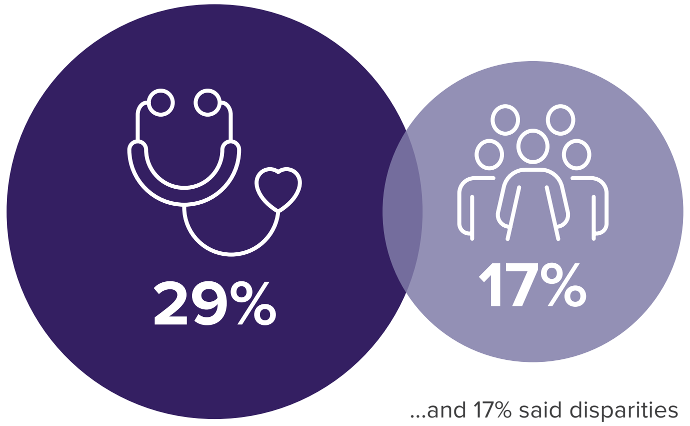
Breast cancer is different for everyone

Decades of research have shown some groups of people get lower-quality care and have worse outcomes. For example, triple-negative breast cancer is more common among Black, young, and Ashkenazi Jewish people. This subtype of cancer has fewer targeted treatment options, making it harder to treat effectively. Other groups, like people who live in rural areas, often live far from quality healthcare providers. This means delays in getting screened, diagnosed, and treated for breast cancer, and lower survival rates than for people who live in suburban or urban areas. People with less education and lower incomes also face poorer outcomes. People in the LGBTQIA+ community may find it hard to access care that supports their needs and experiences. Understanding these differences is key to connecting communities with the information and support they need.

> “Not a lot of people look like me at the cancer center.”
> —Survey respondent

Disparities in care

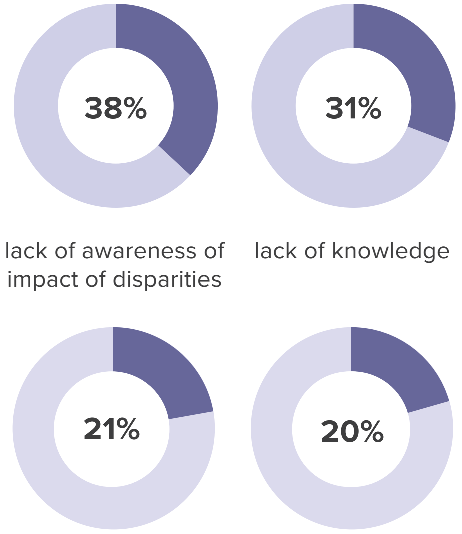
What has the most impact on your breast cancer experience?



29% of respondents identified a lack of access to quality care...

...and 17% said disparities among specific communities were unmet needs with the most impact.

Respondents said these specific challenges contributed to disparities in their care:



38% lack of awareness of impact of disparities

31% lack of knowledge

21% difficulty getting treatment in rural area

20% cultural and language differences

We can support people facing disparities in their breast cancer care.

Survey respondents suggested:

Share stories of people who have navigated these challenges and what they learned

Create resources and support groups for specific community needs

Deliver trusted information and support resources where underserved communities get health information

Highlight and partner with community organizations to share resources and make more connections across communities

> “Outside of cities there is a major gap.”
> —Survey respondent

Financial strain and basic needs ranked higher among non-White respondents.

Healthcare provider voices

About 11% of the respondents to our survey said they work with people with breast cancer. The biggest groups who responded included nurses and social workers. Their responses rated the same needs as highest for their patients, but interestingly, at even higher rates than other respondents.

Healthcare providers themselves are experiencing a different kind of stress while guiding and treating their patients. Burnout is stress related to work that creates physical and emotional exhaustion. People with burnout often feel like they are not accomplishing as much as they should.

> "Patient needs are so intense. You never feel like you are doing enough. You stay late to try to make up for the lack of time."
>
> —Healthcare provider respondent

79%

of healthcare provider respondents said the level of burnout among breast cancer providers was significant or very significant.

LBBC offers healthcare provider training to help them deliver supportive care to people in survivorship. Our Survivorship Series training makes it easier to share vetted, evidence-based resources for young people with breast cancer in their care.

Visit **lbbc.org/survivorshipseries** to learn more.

Healthcare providers

What contributes to burnout for people working in breast cancer?

Not able to do enough to meet an individual patient's needs

Lack of support or investment creates frustration and uncertainty

Not enough financial resources to support patients fully

Too few other providers to serve the level of need

Too many patients to attend to all of them well

Hard to see patients without personal support from their family and friends

General feeling of being overworked (i.e., long hours)

Personal experience with cancer can make helping others harder

Losing patients takes a heavy emotional toll

> "Things outside of our control are impacting people. Programs being cut reduces their options for support because the resources are gone."
>
> —Healthcare provider respondent

How LBBC Helps

For 35 years, LBBC has offered trusted information and a community of support to people impacted by breast cancer. Through our programs, we support the needs of the community by offering ways to Connect, Learn, and Thrive — together. Below are some highlights of our impact in 2025.

Connect

More than 240 leadership volunteers engaged with 127,000 people at advocacy events in their community

Reached 2 million people through digital content, webinars, and events

Over 3,000 people placed individualized support requests, getting connected to crucial information and resources

Real stories from people with breast cancer, whose words offer comfort, perspective, and a reminder that you are not alone

Learn

Nearly 800 people participate in our annual Conference on Metastatic Breast Cancer, celebrating its 20th year in 2026

In-person and virtual learning opportunities through webinars, advocacy trainings, and conferences

100% of our medical content is reviewed by medical and psychosocial experts

More than 400 books provided at no cost to nearly 200 parents to help them talk with their children about breast cancer

Thrive

Distributed nearly $375,000 in financial assistance grants to 346 people in treatment to cover housing, utilities, and transportation

425 people received a travel grant or fee waiver to attend our Conference on Metastatic Breast Cancer in 2025

Practical tips and expert advice for improving physical and emotional health at all phases of the breast cancer journey

> "My therapist recommended that I find something to get involved in. She thought that LBBC would help me, and it has."
>
> —Survey respondent

Everyone at LBBC is grateful for the insights from our 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey. Understanding the challenges people face with breast cancer helps us focus where help is needed most. Beyond easy-to-access financial support, our survey showed that people with breast cancer need trusted information and support to live better. This means simple, practical ways to reduce side effects, sleep better, stay active, eat well, find connection, and feel good.

Since our founding, Living Beyond Breast Cancer has offered trusted information and a community of support to people impacted by breast cancer. In 2026 and beyond, we recommit to our vision of a world where no one facing breast cancer feels uniformed or alone. We will prioritize the needs of the community through the programs, resources, and tools that help people with breast cancer connect, learn, and thrive.

Our community counts on us for insight on side effects from breast cancer treatment, the latest medical news, and answers from leading experts. They turn to us for emotional support through our Breast Cancer Helpline, award-winning blog, online connections, and communities.

Partnering with Living Beyond Breast Cancer means supporting a trusted organization with 35 years of impact. When you give time or funds, you make an immediate, positive difference in the lives of people affected by breast cancer when they need it most. Learn more about supporting our work at **lbbc.org/donate**.

Connect with us.

We're here when you need support, answers, or someone to talk to. Find programs, articles, events, and real stories at **lbbc.org**.

Email
Get expert info, inspiring stories, and event updates in your inbox. Sign up at **lbbc.org/subscribe**.

Call us
Need to talk? Call our **Breast Cancer Helpline** at **(888) 753-5222**,
Mon–Fri, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. ET

Follow us
Join our community on social media
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