

## Airbnb offers free accommodation for patients with cancer

Airbnb has announced two new partnerships with the Bone Marrow & Cancer Foundation and the Cancer Support Community, organisations that provide support to critically ill patients in times of need, as part of its Open Home for Medical Stays programme.

The programme—which was launched last year during the Biden Cancer Initiative Summit in the USA and has already helped around 2000 people to date—allows Airbnb hosts to volunteer their homes free of charge to patients with cancer who are travelling for critical medical treatment or respite because of their illness. Not only will the Bone Marrow & Cancer Foundation and Cancer Support Community now benefit from access to free housing through the scheme, but Airbnb is donating more than US\$1.2 million to both organisations to help patients and

their families pay accommodation costs where housing might not be available.

Patients need to meet specific eligibility criteria in order to be considered for the programme, including certain geographical and economic requirements. The minimum travel distance for treatment, scans, and other essential medical care is 100 miles, while the maximum annual income for patients is dependent upon household size (\$49 380 gross for a household of two persons, for example). The necessity of treatment must also be verified on application and signed off by a medical professional.

Christina Merrill, (Bone Marrow & Cancer Foundation) explained: “This programme will have a profound and life-saving impact on patient care because the lack of available housing close to cancer centres can cause

a patient not to travel to the best treatment centres or delay treatment, all impacting survival rates.”

“You can hear the gratitude in the voices of patients who are benefiting,” added Kim Thiboldeaux (Cancer Support Community). “One couple living on a fixed income had to travel 1400 miles for treatment—and the fact that they could stay for free in an Airbnb home meant the world to them. They called it their lifesaver.”

Eduardo Bruera (MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA) also commented: “Our group and others have documented that financial distress is very high among cancer patients everywhere. Support for accommodation has great potential to improve quality of life and adherence to treatment.”

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For more on **Airbnb's offer of free housing** see <https://wb.md/2DajAUF>

For more on the **Bone Marrow & Cancer Foundation** see <http://bonemarrow.org/>

For more on the **Cancer Support Community** see <https://www.cancersupportcommunity.org/>  
<https://wb.md/2DajAUF>