



Bassett Cancer Institute Initiative Campaign

Case for Support

Updated: January 2025

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Executive Summary

Cancer is one of the most common chronic diseases in the United States. In the rural region served by Bassett Healthcare Network, an older population, lower socioeconomic status, and a significant percentage of individuals and families who are underinsured or uninsured contribute to a higher-than-average incidence of cancer. The number of people seeking cancer care at Bassett facilities continues to trend higher each year, with patients coming from both within and outside of Bassett Healthcare Network's eight-county service region.

Bassett's commitment to the diagnosis and treatment of cancer patients dates to the founding of The Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown over 100 years ago. Bassett maintains one of the longest-running hospital cancer registries in New York State. The cancer registry collects data on all cancer patients diagnosed and treated at Bassett facilities and provides feedback to patients' practitioners regarding quality of care, thereby assuring that patients who are treated at Bassett Cancer Institute receive the follow-up care they need for the rest of their lives. The registry was started in the mid-1950s by Dr. John Olson, a cancer, endocrine, and thoracic surgeon who was dean of general surgery at Bassett. Olson understood that maintaining a cancer registry was necessary for Bassett's program to be recognized by the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer, still the gold standard of cancer care in the U.S. Olson is considered the founder of Bassett's formal cancer program, which today is one of the longest continuously accredited cancer programs in the country.

It is uncommon to find such a sophisticated level of cancer care available in a rural region as the program Bassett offers to the population it serves. Bassett's cancer care team includes highly experienced hematologists, medical, radiation, and surgical oncologists, a gynecologic oncologist, and oncology-certified registered nurses. The support staff includes nurse navigators, social workers, nutritionists, physical therapists, and financial counselors. The team works together to provide comprehensive treatment plans for patients. Treatment options include surgical oncology, chemotherapy, clinical cancer trials, immunotherapy, and radiation therapy. In addition, cancer care at Bassett extends to post-treatment follow up and includes a cancer survivorship program.

Bassett also offers a telehealth program developed with University of Rochester genetic counselors. The goal is to broaden access to genetic counseling and have all patients tested for a hereditary component to their cancer. This initiative will help identify families with a predisposition to cancer so individuals can receive preventive care earlier. In addition, patients diagnosed with an inherited form of cancer may be eligible for new treatments as gene therapy continues to advance.

In 2021, Bassett announced the availability of an emerging cancer therapy that uses a new class of radiopharmaceutical drugs, called radioligand therapy, to deliver radiation therapy specifically and even more precisely to cancer cells.

Bassett's was also among the first cancer programs in the state to begin offering patients Lutathera as a radioligand treatment for neuroendocrine cancers. More recently, in December of 2022, Bassett Cancer Institute announced that the radiopharmaceutical program has expanded to include Pluvicto, an emerging targeted treatment for patients battling metastatic prostate cancer.

The majority of the clinical trials Bassett participates in come through the National Cancer Institute and allow us to partner with institutions around the world to enroll anywhere from 200 to 2,000 patients in various studies. In addition to NCI-sponsored trials, we also partner with other medical institutions and medical device manufacturers to test promising new treatments.

The wealth of research-based and other learning opportunities in the cancer center also attracts a steady flow of medical and surgical interns and residents, as well as Columbia-Bassett medical students who rotate through the Bassett Cancer Institute on a regular basis. Given the prevalence of cancer at the national, state and local level, oncology education is essential for the next generation of doctors.

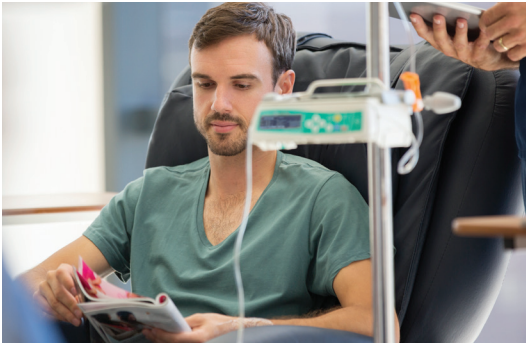
For some patients, the trip to a Bassett cancer center may be an hour or more. Furthermore, reliable transportation is a challenge for many individuals living in rural central New York, and public transportation is limited or non-existent. Since 2008, the Cancer Services Program (CSP) oversees the delivery of comprehensive breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening and diagnostic services to eligible uninsured and under-insured individuals in New York State through local exams offered in the Mobile Cancer Coach. Bassett's program was among the first mobile cancer screening initiatives in the U.S. In 2018, the program's service area was expanded to six counties to reach more individuals with free preventive screenings. The clinicians who staff the mobile program travel the region offering high-tech digital mammography to screen for breast cancer. Clinical exam rooms enable staff to perform additional types of cancer screenings, including cervical cancer screening, Pap tests, and pelvic exams.

"Since the program's inception, tens of thousands of breast, cervical and colorectal screenings have been provided and hundreds of patients referred on for follow-up care," notes Mark Kirkby, supervisor of CSP, which serves Delaware, Otsego, Schoharie, Oneida, Herkimer, and Madison counties. The state of New York provides funding for the CSP's free screenings. The CSP also assists individuals with enrollment in the Medicaid Cancer Treatment Program, an insurance program for individuals diagnosed with breast, cervical, colorectal or prostate cancer.



The Need

Rising Cancer Burden and Optimal Care

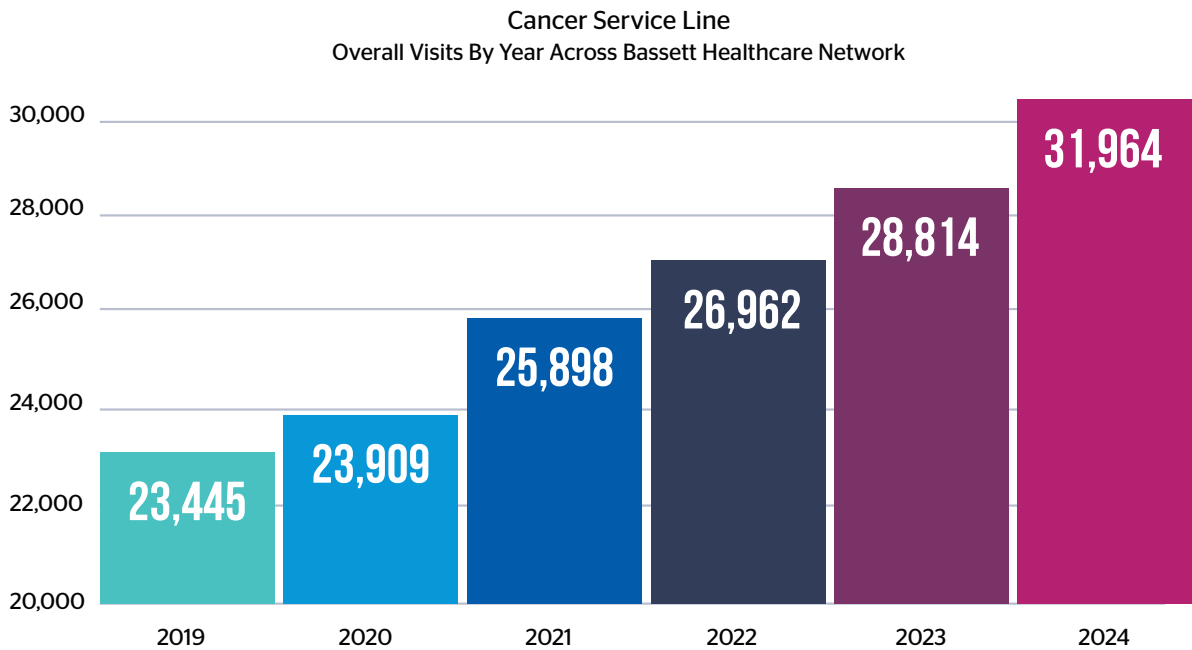


Every patient deserves optimal cancer care, but the rising cancer burden in Bassett’s service region has stretched current resources to the limit, and all network cancer facilities are due for a major overhaul to keep up with increasing patient volumes and to accommodate the latest advances in cancer treatment and technology. “There has been no significant expansion of the Bassett network’s cancer facilities in more than two decades,” notes Vice President of Facilities Kendra Beers Capraro.

The number of patients seeking cancer care at Bassett facilities continues to climb. In 2019 there were 23,445 visits to Bassett’s Cooperstown, Oneonta, Herkimer, and Cobleskill cancer centers combined. In 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, that number rose to 23,919 visits. The second year of the pandemic, cancer visits climbed again to an all-time high of 25,898. By the end of 2022 the number of cancer visits across the network surpassed the previous year, climbing to 26,962. In 2023, cancer visits rose again to 28,814. In 2024, our network saw the highest visit numbers to date at 31,964. Cancer patients travel to Bassett’s cancer center from zip codes within and outside of the network’s eight-county service region. Due to the rising number of cancer patients, more access is needed.

“Receiving a cancer diagnosis is a life changing moment. Gratefully today there are more and more clinical treatments, early detection opportunities, and prevention measures that extend lives and save lives. By supporting the Bassett Cancer Institute we will grow the reality of comprehensive cancer treatment close to home, including the clinical programs that facilitate cancer care at Cobleskill Regional Hospital, Fox Hospital and Little Falls Hospital. I am excited for the difference that we will make through the expansion of services for the residents of Bassett Healthcare Network’s eight-county rural region.” – Steven Kroll, Chair, Friends of Bassett Healthcare Network Board of Directors.

Figure 1: Cancer patient visits 2019-2024



Expanding Access



The Mobile Cancer Coach is an ideal mechanism for reaching the population that has difficulty accessing the type of diagnostic and preventive services that could significantly reduce suffering from cancer in this region. The coach reaches a significant number of patients who live in rural areas, reflecting one of Bassett's goals to serve economically disadvantaged and underprivileged populations in rural settings. Early detection is usually possible only if a patient undergoes screening before symptoms arise, as the cancers detected this early do not cause pain or other obvious problems.

When Bassett's recreation vehicle (RV)-type medical coach first hit the road over a decade ago, the mobile screening program represented a milestone in cancer services outreach. In 2017, the original vehicle was replaced with a new generation RV-type medical coach containing the latest digital technology and screening equipment. Bassett's mobile medical screening program serves individuals within and outside of the eight-county region considered Bassett's primary service territory. That territory covers more than 5,600 square miles and the program reaches more than a thousand individuals each year. Due to the large region the coach covers, mileage adds up quickly, which leads to numerous repair costs. The lifespan of a coach is generally ten years or less.

Unfortunately, the newest Coach spent the majority of 2022 and 2023 off the road due to engine failure and electrical issues. In 2024, the coach was retired and services suspended. Bassett must invest in a replacement coach to continue to fulfill the needs of our patients.

The Cost

Bassett Healthcare Network seeks to raise \$3.5 million to support the expansion of Bassett's cancer services. State grant dollars will cover a portion of the construction costs. The remainder must be raised through the Bassett Cancer Institute Initiative. Funds raised through a successful capital campaign are proposed to be allocated in the following ways.

The Projects

Expansion of Bassett Cancer Institute at FoxCare Center - \$2M

An expanded Oncology Unit at FoxCare Center will increase access for cancer patients at one of Bassett's most utilized locations, and will provide a more comfortable, soothing cancer care environment for patients.

- New cancer fighting equipment: The Varian Edge Accelerator.
- The construction of additional clinic exam rooms and infusion treatment bays.
- The addition of physician offices.
- Additional nursing stations.
- Cancer pharmacy modernization.



Registration



Waiting Room

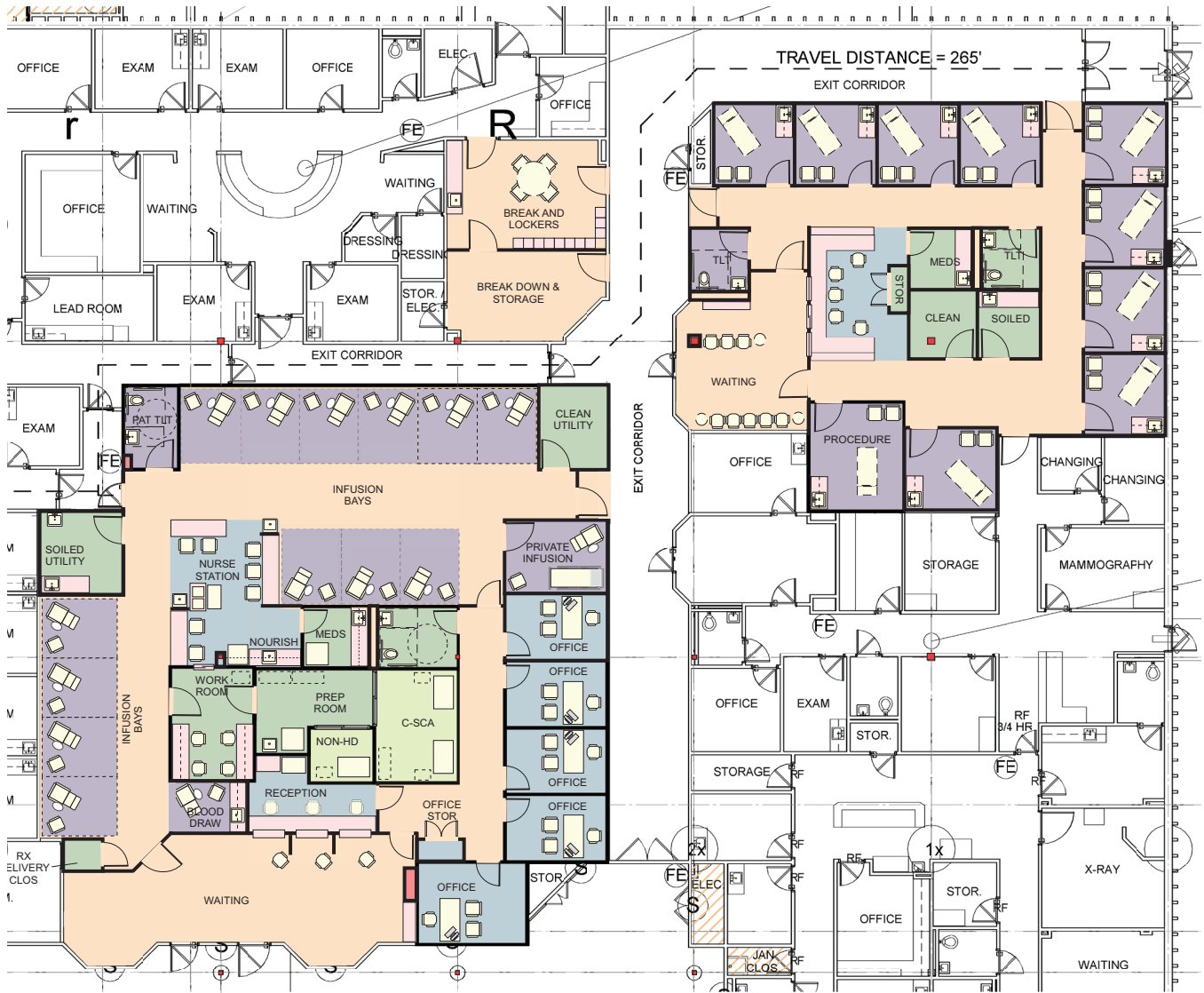


Infusion Room



Nursing Station

FoxCare Center Floor Plan



New Mobile Cancer Screening Coach- \$1.5M

The anticipated investment in a new RV-type coach equipped with digital screening equipment and clinical exam space is \$1.5 million. Once a new coach is secured, the operating budget for the coach is \$230,000 per year. This includes everything needed to keep this state-of-the-art mobile cancer screening center on the road - including vehicle and equipment maintenance, supplies, fuel, and staffing.

Recognition Opportunities

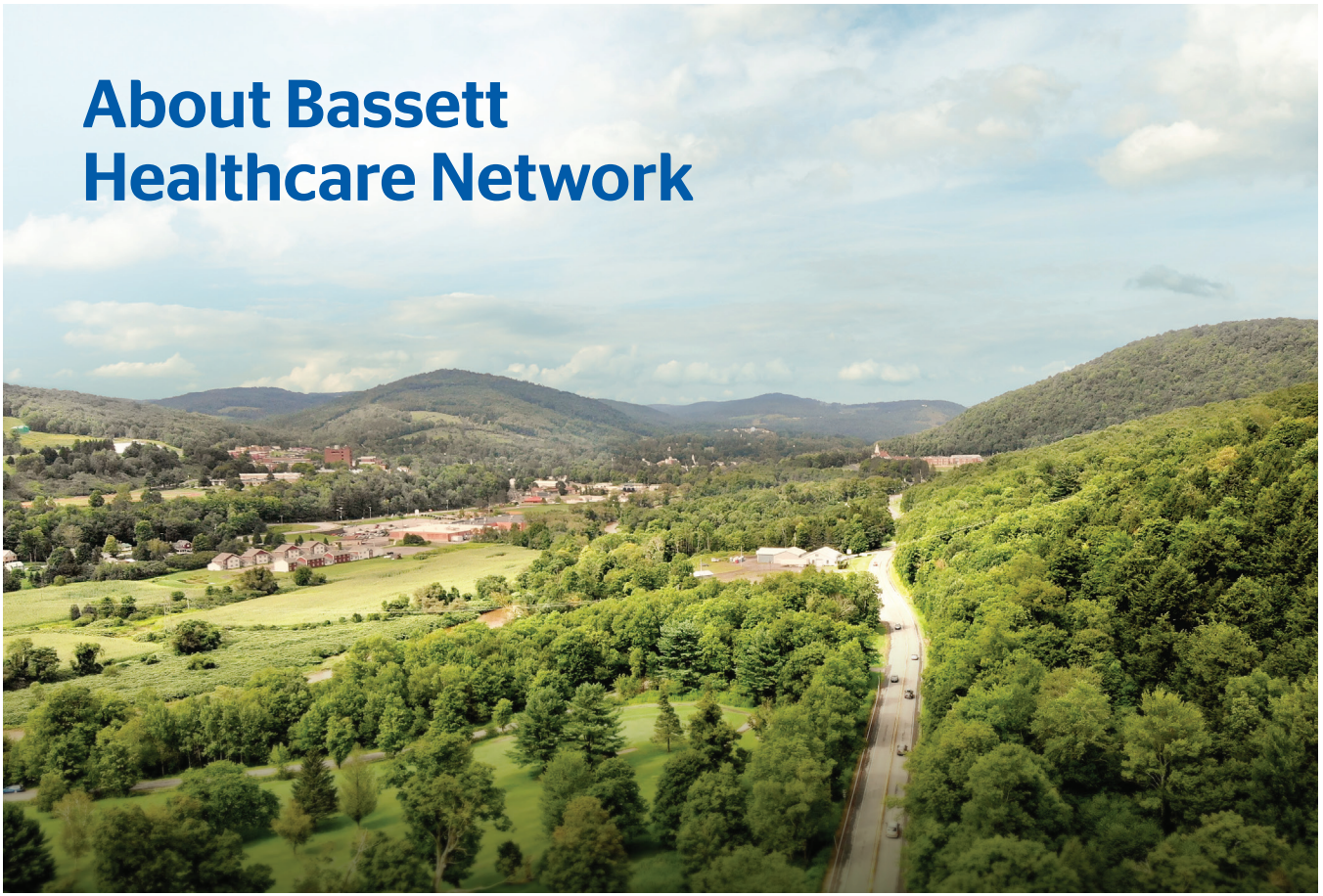
In consideration for gifts made to the Bassett Cancer Institute, the following recognition opportunities are currently available.

MEDICAL ONCOLOGY UNIT			
Waiting Room	\$750,000	Private Infusion Rooms	\$75,000
Nursing Station	\$250,000	Infusion Bays (11)	\$50,000
Exam Rooms (10)	\$100,000		
MOBILE CANCER SCREENING COACH		DONOR RECOGNITION WALL	
Logo on Back of Coach	\$250,000	All donors who pledge or contribute \$10,000 and above will be recognized, in perpetuity, on a centrally placed installation within the Bassett Cancer Institute at Fox Care.	
Exam Room	\$100,000		
Mammography Room	\$100,000		

“Our cancer care team is driven to do the best we can for our patients. We saw that play out during the pandemic when caregivers – despite exhausting hours day after day, week after week, and month after month – continued to show up. They were concerned for their patients’ well-being and committed to seeing them through a very difficult time that was made worse by a pandemic. I am extremely proud of what we accomplished. A successful fundraising initiative will reward their efforts and allow us to improve our facilities and expand services to accommodate the increased demand and the needs of our patients.”

Dr. Alfred Tinger
Chief and Medical Director of Bassett Cancer Institute

About Bassett Healthcare Network



Since 1922, when The Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital opened its doors to patients from Cooperstown and surrounding communities, its caregivers have been dedicated to improving the health of its patients and the well-being of the communities served in central New York. A century later, Bassett Healthcare Network has evolved to include five hospitals – Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown, A.O. Fox Hospital in Oneonta, Cobleskill Regional Hospital, Little Falls

Hospital, and O'Connor Hospital in Delhi.

The network also operates over two dozen community-based health centers, more

than 20 school-based health centers, two long-term care facilities, a home health agency, and other health partners in related fields. The Bassett Medical Group is comprised of a full-time, salaried staff of more than 500 physicians and other advanced practice clinicians. Today, Bassett Healthcare Network is an integrated health system that provides care and services to nearly one million people in a 5,600 square mile region in upstate New York.





Friends of
Bassett Healthcare Network

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