



Every cancer. Every life.

Kathleen Goss, PhD

Senior Vice President,
Partnerships & Capacity
Building

May 21, 2023

Dear Chairwoman Savage and members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board:

On behalf of the American Cancer Society, I am proud to support of University of Chicago Medicine's proposal to build a new dedicated cancer hospital to serve Chicago, particularly vulnerable populations, on the South Side.

A center dedicated solely to the treatment and care of cancer patients not only would provide a much-needed medical service to residents of Chicago and the entire region, but it would also help elevate Illinois to the forefront of global cancer research and care in the future.

Due, in part, to increased research and advanced therapies, the risk of dying from cancer in the United States has continually declined over the past three decades. Still, cancer remains the second most common cause of death in America after heart disease. This year alone, a total of 1.9 million new cancer cases and 609,360 deaths from cancer are expected to occur – approximately 1,670 deaths per day.

It is important to recognize that populations traditionally excluded, including African Americans, bear a disproportionate share of the cancer burden. Building a dedicated cancer hospital on the South Side would be a crucial step in combatting cancer disparities among Blacks, who have the highest death rate and shortest survival rates of any racial and ethnic group in the United States for most cancers. Black men, in particular, have the highest cancer incidence rates. The causes of these inequalities are complex and reflect social and economic disparities and cultural differences as well as lack of access to high quality health care. In Chicago and across the country, underlying systemic discrimination reduces access to cancer screening and care that allows for early detection and appropriate high-quality treatment for many African Americans. This population would greatly benefit from the convenient access to advanced technological care, modern diagnostics and innovative treatments a dedicated cancer hospital located in the heart of their community could provide.

We are also excited about the opportunities for increased diversity in clinical trial participation that this hospital would provide. Participation in clinical trials is essential in conducting the potentially groundbreaking research needed to further reduce the most common cancers in underrepresented populations and provide a template for care that would be beneficial far beyond Chicago's borders.

Alongside partners like the UChicago Medicine, the American Cancer Society is committed to discovering better treatments, uncovering factors that may cause cancer and improving cancer patients' quality of life and health equity. We believe a dedicated cancer hospital offering modern technological care, diagnostics, and treatment, as well as potentially groundbreaking research would be an ardent partner in further advancing our goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our support. We hope you will approve this hospital project and help us take an important step toward improving cancer outcomes and addressing disparities in Chicago and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen H. Goss".

Kathleen H. Goss