

I was privileged to receive the LBCA travel scholarship to attend the 2023 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium. As a healthcare professional for over 25 years, I have always worked to align the needs of the patient to the current and future capabilities of the care delivery system. As a recently diagnosed (February 2023) breast cancer patient, that integration has become that much more important.

The highlight of the sessions that I was able to attend occurred on Tuesday. Special Session 3: Social Determinants of Health: Impact on Cancer Care provided the opportunity to hear from several different organizations on how they are assessing and, where possible, intervening on the non-medical drivers that can negatively influence a patient's ability to respond to their treatment plan. Food insecurity is a growing area of interest for states and insurance companies; under Texas' current iteration of the 1115 Medicaid Transformation waiver, physician practices, hospitals and community mental health centers are required to screen patients regarding food insecurity, as well as to document that they have put some type of follow-up in place. UT Southwestern's plan to open a "Nutrition Pharmacy" would be an innovative way to help support a patient in complying with the guidance received from their physician and/or dietician to help mitigate treatment related symptoms as well as setting them up for future success post-treatment. As an advocate, the role of nutrition in treatment and recovery cannot be understated.

The other highlight for me was the Lobular Breast Cancer session. It was enlightening to learn about where the research is going and reiterated that my medical oncologist (Jason Mouabbi) is not only a comforting presence to his patients but deeply ingrained in the research community and committed to identifying new and better ways to identify, treat and educate patients on this diagnosis. The information about mammograms with contrast was exciting to

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me, and provides an opportunity to make those patients who are initially diagnosed with breast density with another tool for early identification of masses.

I wish to again thank the Lobular Breast Cancer Alliance for providing this scholarship. I was able to come back to my work setting and share additional knowledge with my staff who do direct patient outreach as part of their daily responsibilities in order to close care gaps (such as breast screening). Early detection is such a powerful tool in saving lives.