Iowa Cancer Plan Implementation Grants

Iowa Cancer Consortium
www.canceriowa.org

Thank you for your interest in applying for funds to support cancer control work in Iowa! Before you begin, please take a moment to visit our grants webpage, at https://canceriowa.org/grants/ifp.

Application

Iowa Cancer Consortium
www.canceriowa.org

FY26 Iowa Cancer Plan Implementation Grant Cycle

Applicant Information:

Name of Project Lead: Jennie S. Schmidt
Project Lead Email Address: jschmidt@freemedicalclinic.org
Project Lead Phone Number: 319-337-9727
Organization: Iowa City Free Medical Clinic
Street Address: 2440 Towncrest Drive
City: Iowa City, Iowa
Zip Code: 52240

Project Details:

Project Title: Patient Navigation at the Iowa City Free Medical & Dental Clinic
Total Amount of Funds Requested for FY26 (up to $25,000): $25,000.00

Provide a brief description of your intended project and any relevant background information about your organization. *(Suggested: 1,000 words or less)*

The Iowa City Free Medical & Dental Clinic (FMC) is requesting funds to support our ability to continue to employ a part-time bilingual Spanish speaking patient navigator to facilitate our ability to refer patients to outside partners for essential cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment. The Patient Navigator position is a new position which began in January, 2025 in response to our loss of in-kind radiology and pathology patient services formerly provided by Mercy Hospital, Iowa City. In the fall of 2024, we received funds from the Community Foundation of Johnson County to pilot this position. This grant is seeking funds to continue this essential work.

In the wake of Mercy's closing, we found that our capacity to refer patients for essential screening, diagnostic and follow up services including mammography, colposcopy, ultrasound, biopsies, MRI's, CT's and cancer treatment was significantly impaired, and in many instances, completely halted, as what was a simple phone call referral to Mercy transformed into the need to navigate the patient financial assistance process at UI Healthcare for each individual patient. This change required time and attention from our staff that we didn't have, so throughout 2024, we had to limit the number of patients we were able to refer for routine mammography and colonoscopies, diagnostic transvaginal and abdominal ultrasounds, MRI's and CT's, colposcopies and other essential screening and diagnostic services. Though Grant funding from Team Breast Friends in the fall of 2024 helped us to secure access to 50 radiologic services at Corridor Radiology, this goes to just a fraction of the women we serve, as, for example, prior to losing services at Mercy we utilized 112 breast cancer screening and diagnostic services. Since Mercy closed, our patients must participate in the patient financial assistance process at UI Healthcare to receive all other screening, diagnostic and treatment services – a process which is particularly demanding as many of our patients face language and literacy barriers and lack the familiarity to navigate the UI Healthcare system without support.

Since January, 2025 we have had a part-time (10 – 15 hours/week) patient navigator made possible through funds from the Community Foundation of Johnson County. Funds from this grant are requested to allow us to extend this position through May 31, 2026, if not further. The goal is for this position to enable us to refer upwards of 200 women for routine mammography, and for our patients to readily have access to colposcopies, colonoscopies, MRI's, CT's biopsies and ultrasounds for detection of other forms of cancer we routinely encounter.

The FMC fills a critical gap in healthcare access for uninsured and underinsured individuals in our community since 1971 providing patients with primary, acute, chronic, specialty and dental care. This care encompasses vital cancer screening, prevention, and treatment services, such as Pap exams for cervical cancer screening, referrals for screening and diagnostic mammograms, colonoscopies, colposcopies, transvaginal and abdominal ultrasounds, as well as referrals for biopsies, CT scans, and MRIs when necessary for further cancer detection and confirmation. For patients requiring surgery and subsequent cancer treatment, the FMC coordinates these

services with UI Healthcare and arranges necessary transportation to those appointments. The presence of a Patient Navigator on staff allows us to coordinate these services. Without this position, our ability to effectively collaborate with UI Healthcare will be significantly hampered. This investment is crucial as it will directly impact vulnerable community members who face substantial barriers in accessing essential cancer care as we are the primary portal for the uninsured to access healthcare in Johnson County and surrounding communities to the south and east.

In Fiscal Year 2024 we hosted 6,715 patient visits serving 1,305 individuals. This represents a 15% increase in service demand over the prior year. 79% of our patients live below the Federal Poverty Level and 62% identify as Hispanic/Latino, 65% are female.

How many individuals in Iowa do you expect to reach through your project?
200-300

In which Iowa counties do you expect to reach people through your project?
80% of our patients reside in Johnson County. The other 20% come from 25 other Iowa Counties, including 8% from Muscatine County and 4% from Washington County as the next most common counties.

Please describe how your project addresses one or more of these priority areas: *(Suggested: 1,000 words or less.)*

This project addresses several of the Iowa Cancer Plan priority areas. This project seeks to identify and decrease cancer disparities across the cancer continuum in Johnson County and the surrounding area by helping us to be able to include cancer prevention, screening for early detection, and treatment for our uninsured and underinsured patients, most of whom are Hispanic/Latino. Individuals without health insurance lack access to health care and are more likely to be diagnosed with cancer at a later stage and have worse outcomes. In addition to lacking adequate health resources, most of our patients live with challenges in all areas of the social determinants of health and have resulting health concerns. 65% of our patients identify as Latino/Hispanic and almost 79% of our patients are living at or below the federal poverty line. Both low-income individuals and Latino/Hispanic population disproportionately experience disparities in early cancer detection and survival rates. The CDC recognizes that cancer

is the leading cause of death for Hispanic and Latino people in the United States and that compared to members of other racial and ethnic groups, have higher rates of getting and dying from some kinds of cancer. Latina/Hispanic women have a high rate of getting cervical cancer and the second highest rate of dying from cervical cancer.

Support from this grant would ensure that we have a bilingual Spanish speaking Patient Navigator at the clinic to facilitate patient education, referrals and ability to complete the patient financial assistance process at UI Healthcare. This position is essential to ensure that we maximize the number of patients with access to screening, diagnosis and treatment for all forms of cancer. Without this position, we will be greatly limited in our ability to include access to these essential services. Though we can do some screening measures at the clinic, such as breast and pap exams, we rely on referrals to UI Healthcare for mammography, ultrasound, MRI's, CT's, colposcopies, biopsies and comprehensive cancer treatment and follow-up when needed. The presence of a Spanish speaking bilingual patient navigator at the clinic greatly magnifies the impact of the work we can facilitate as it increases our ability to work with UI Healthcare to further eliminate barriers to care and reduce known health disparities and cancer outcomes.

Please indicate which type of funding you are applying for (choose one):

☐ **Single Year** (applying for one year of funding only)

☒ **Multi-Year: Year 1** (applying for the first year of a two- or three-year project with the intention of applying for Year 2 in FY27, if awarded)

☐ **Multi-Year: Year 2** (FY25 Year 1 awardees only) *

☐ **Multi-Year: Year 3** (FY25 Year 2 awardees only) *

If you are applying for continued funding (funded last year for the same multi-year project), please describe your success and challenges in previous years of funding. *(Suggested: 250 words or less.*)
Click or tap here to enter text.

Which goal(s) and strategy(ies) from the Iowa Cancer Plan will your project support/help to implement? (*Suggested: 100 words or less.)*
This project focuses on the Iowa Cancer Plan goals to identify and eliminate cancer health disparities by reducing the burden of cancer for all Iowans, increasing the number of Iowans with access to health care, prioritize essential cancer screening, prevention and treatment for Latinos in Iowa, who face great inequities of access to such care.

Project Objectives:

These objectives will serve as the grant deliverables for your project, if awarded. The Iowa Cancer Consortium Board of Directors may request to change, add, or remove objectives with your agreement prior to funding. Where applicable, please include baseline (current) data. Please add additional objectives, if desired.

Objectives should be SMARTIE goals: **Specific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, **T**ime-Based, **I**nclusive, and **E**quitable. The CDC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program put together a helpful resource for SMARTIE objectives. (This and additional resources can be accessed at https://canceriowa.org/grants/ifp)*

***Objective #1:** Increase access to comprehensive cancer care for vulnerable community members at UI Healthcare through patient navigation services up from 72 to at least 150.

- Deadline *(funding period is July 1, 2025-May 31, 2026.* May 31, 2026
- Baseline data: From 1/1/2024 – 12/31/2024 72 Referrals made during period **without** patient navigation):
- Target by deadline: Increase the number of vulnerable patients actively engaged in cancer screening, diagnosis, and/or treatment with the support of the patient navigator by at least 125 patients from 2024 (to approximately 200).

***Objective #2**: Increase the number of women over 40 years old receiving routine mammography screening to at least 100 (up from 50).

- Deadline *(funding period is July 1, 2025-May 31, 2026):* By May 31, 2026
- Baseline data: Between 7/1/2024 and 5/14/2025: 25
- Target by deadline: May 31, 2026

Project Collaborators:

The Iowa Cancer Consortium seeks to fund collaborative proposals. **At least one collaborator is required per project.** A letter of support is required for each listed collaborator.

Collaborator #1 (required)

Name: Ami Gaarde
Organization: University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics
Mailing Address: 200 Hawkins Drive, C53-H GH | Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Phone: 319-384-6599
Email: ami-gaarde@uiowa.edu
Please describe the collaborator's proposed responsibilities/role in the project. *Ami Gaarde of the Care Coordination at UIHC and the main contact we work with when coordinating care referrals.*
Click or tap here to enter text.

Evidence & Evaluation:

What scientific evidence is there that your project will be effective? (*Suggested: 500 words or less.)*
Scientific evidence indicates that patient navigators can be effective in addressing cancer concerns within the Hispanic/Latino population, particularly by improving screening rates and promoting early detection. Studies have shown that Hispanics, and Latinas specifically, may exhibit lower adherence to recommended cancer screenings, such as mammography, often due to factors like low health literacy, lack of knowledge about screening benefits, and limited awareness of available services. However, interventions utilizing patient navigators have demonstrated success in mitigating these barriers and increasing screening rates. This is crucial because evidence-based cancer screening, which detects early-stage cancers or precancerous abnormalities, is a highly effective strategy for reducing cancer incidence and mortality, especially for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancers, as recommended by the US Preventive Services Task Force. Given that Hispanic individuals experience higher rates of both being uninsured and lower rates of breast and cervical cancer screening and are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer at a later stage, patient navigation plays a vital role in improving access to and utilization of these essential services, ultimately contributing to better cancer outcomes.

Additionally, the use of patient navigators is known to help address challenges typically experienced by immigrant and refugee populations in accessing care by providing language accessible, support that is culturally responsive and recognizes concerns this patient population might have when undergoing the patient financial screening process and seeking care at a large medical institution.

Spencer, J. C., Noel, L., Shokar, N. K., & Pignone, M. P. (2023). Understanding the role of access in Hispanic cancer screening disparities. *Cancer*, *129*(10), 1569-1578.

(Source: American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2024*. American Cancer Society, Inc. 2024. https://www.cancer.org/research/cancer-facts-statistics/all-cancer-facts-figures/2024-cancer-facts-figures.html)

Ma, Z. Q., & Richardson, L. C. (2022). Cancer screening prevalence and associated factors among US adults. *Preventing chronic disease*, *19*, E22.

How will you evaluate your project? How will you know if you have been successful? (*Suggested: 250 words or less.)*
We will evaluate our project by tracking the number of services received as the result of patients that work with a patient navigator to gain access to cancer-related screening, diagnostic and preventative treatment through the assistance of the Patient Navigator. We will be successful if we increase this number over what we had been able to do without the Patient Navigator after Mercy Hospital closed.

How will you modify your project to meet the unique needs of certain populations? *(Suggested: 500 words or less.)*

Most of our patients speak Spanish as their first language. As such, it is a requirement that the Patient Navigator we hire be fully bilingual in both written and spoken Spanish. This person will be ablet to translate materials and communicate in the patients' own language to provide the clearest information and guidance possible. Additionally, this person will need to recognize and work with patients' uncertainty and hesitancy to access services outside of our physical clinic location which can stem from lower levels of literacy and language, lack of familiarity with geography or concerns about possible negative consequences to their immigration status.

Budget:

Please explain your budget in words: *(Suggested: 100 words or less)*
Funds from this budget are directed towards our ability to hire a part-time patient navigator. As this position does not yet exist, I cannot supply a resume/CV, however, I have attached the job description and will forward information on the candidate we hire as we move forward.

We are seeking funds to be able to employ a part-time Spanish bilingual Patient Navigator over 11 months. We have included some additional funds for printing, supplies and general clinic overhead to support the project. In kind costs to this project include volunteer physicians who provide the referrals/do initial screening at the Clinic as possible.

Use the table below to complete your proposed budget:

Reminder: Funding period is July 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026. This is an 11-month period, not a full year.

Budget Items and Explanation	Grant Funds Requested	Other Funding	Total Funds for Project
If possible, please divide them into categories. Examples include staff support, travel, supplies, equipment, etc. If service delivery or incentives are included within the budget, please include a statement of need along with each budget item.	*Funds being requested from the Iowa Cancer Consortium.*	*Include in-kind support, volunteer hours, collaborator financial support, and other types of financial support.*	*Include requested Iowa Cancer Consortium funds + items outlined in the Other Funding category.*
Staff Support			
Patient Navigator, 15 hours/Week @ 32.00	$23,040.00		$23,040.00
Volunteer Providers		In-Kind	
Printing			
Photocopies and printing of materials for patients, including financial assistance applications, educational materials and written medical information.	$500.00		$460.00
Supplies			
Computer for Patient Navigator	$1,000.00		$1,000.00
Other			
General Clinic Overhead	$500.00		$500.00
Totals:	$25,000.00	$0	$25,000.00

University of Iowa Health Care

Department of Nursing Services &
Patient Care/Adult Care Coordination

200 Hawkins Drive
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Tel 319-356-1616
Web uihc.org

May 15, 2025

Iowa Cancer Consortium
PO Box 859
North Liberty, Iowa 52317

Dear Iowa Cancer Consortium Board of Directors,

I am writing on behalf of University of Iowa Health Care in support of the Iowa City Free Medical Clinic's Patient Navigator project proposed to the Iowa Cancer Consortium as part of the FY26 Iowa Cancer Plan Implementation Grant, Invitation for Proposals.

The University of Iowa will fulfill the following roles in this partnership:

- **Provide access to essential cancer screening and follow-up procedures for** patients who have successfully established need through UIHC Patient Financial Assistance program including screening and diagnostic mammograms, transvaginal ultrasounds, and colposcopies.

Our longstanding partnership with the Iowa City Free Medical Clinic is a key component of the work we do to provide healthcare access to underserved populations and fulfill our mission to improve the overall health of the community. The addition of a Patient Navigator to the clinic staff will facilitate our ability to streamline hospital referrals and strengthen the work we do towards cancer prevention and control.

Sincerely,

Ami Gaarde, BSN, RN, MBA, OCN
Director, Care Coordination Division
University of Iowa Health Care
200 Hawkins Drive, C53-H GH
Iowa City, IA 52242

Patient Navigator at the Iowa City Free Medical Clinic

The Iowa City Free Medical Clinic (FMC) is seeking a Patient Navigator to help us respond to the increased need for patient navigation of the financial assistance programs at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. The Patient Navigator will work directly with uninsured patients to support their financial assistance application process so that they can be referred to services there including access to essential cancer screening, diagnostic and treatment services. This person will serve as a primary contact between the Director of Operations and Medical Director and other clinic staff.

Responsibilities include:

- Become familiar with the patient assistance paperwork protocols and the program in order to best support patients.
- Work directly with patients to fill out and submit required application and materials.
- Communicate with patient and track the progress of their application
- Communicate with the Director of Medical Operations and Director of Clinical Operations on the status of patient financial assistance approval process.
- Work with staff at UIHC to ensure a smooth application process and that all required materials are provided and sufficient.

Position Requirements:

- Fluent in written and spoken Spanish language.
- Ability to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures is crucial.
- Possess Strong problem-solving skills, resourceful and able to find solutions to overcome obstacles.
- Previous experience in a healthcare setting can be valuable, such as experience as a nurse, social worker, community health worker, or patient advocate.
- Knowledge and skill using Microsoft 365 suite or Google Suite to organize work and create effective communications materials.

Hours: 14-18 hours per week. Must be available on Tuesday and Thursdays during the daytime.

Renumeration: $23.00/hour

Note: Allison will take the place of our current patient navigator starting in June 2025 and will be the person in this position.

Allison Largo

2109 Tanglewood St., Iowa City, IA 52245 – 319.853.9499
allison.polsley@gmail.com

Profile

I am a professional linguist, educator, and administrator specializing in Applied Linguistics, Spanish, Portuguese, ESL, and Immigrant Ministries. I am a charismatic, culturally sensitive, and curious individual with experience and fortitude adapting to different and even difficult situations. I have educational, career, and volunteer experience in the aforementioned areas both stateside and in Mexico, Brazil, and Mozambique. I have communicated professionally, academically, and socially both orally and in writing in Spanish and Portuguese throughout my career. My family and I have lived between the U.S. and our home in Guanajuato, Mexico since 2012.

Professional Employment

Iowa Community Core/Americorps, Iowa City IA *Mar. '24 - Current*
Leader of City-Wide Immigrant Maternal Health Project

Community Doulas of Johnson County, Iowa City IA *Feb. '24 - Current*
Bilingual Doula & Community Health Worker

University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics, Iowa City IA *Apr. '23 - June '24*
Spanish Medical Interpreter, Immigrant Patient Advocate, Bilingual Receptionist using EPIC

Iowa City Community School District, Iowa City IA *Feb. '23 - Current*
Spanish & Portuguese Interpreter

Guanajuato Gardens Mexican Imports, Jacksonville, FL & Arlington TX *Mar. '17 – Current*
Owner

All customer contact including: order taking, customer satisfaction, and marketing. Tracking of all client and sales information. Transportation, importation, distribution & shipping logistics. Business taxes.

Casa del Lago, Dallas TX *May '15 - May '17*
ESL & Adult Programs Coordinator at Multi-denominational Non-Profit Ministry - www.casadelago.org

Training, oversight, and evaluation of all ESL teachers and teaching assistants.
Coordination of all life-skills workshops, devotionals, events, and parties.
Tracking of all student information, payments, and participants in ShelbyNext Software and Excel

Christian Healing Ministries, Jacksonville FL *May '13 - May '15*
Contracted Literature Translator

Translation into Spanish, editing, and proofreading of 500+ pages of 4 training manuals and 12 training videos.

Elite Language Institute LLC (ELI), Dallas TX *Nov. '13 – Mar. '15*
Assistant Director

Hiring, overseeing, and evaluating instructors and all office and building staff.
Consulting students about enrollment, change of visa, fees, transfers, etc.
Writing official letters for government and accrediting organizations; managing student database and term files.
Seeking out professional relationships with agents, universities, and scholarship agencies.

Designated School Official – DSO (U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security certificate was in progress)-

Preparing, sending out, and following up with reinstatement and change of visa applications to USCIS (immigration).
Preparing international documents (I-20, I-539, etc.) for prospective and current students.
Updating SEVIS (immigration database) with students' personal and program enrollment information.
Enforcing and complying with policies and procedures dictated by SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program).

Curriculum Director -

Reviewing all teacher's lesson plans for relevance, accuracy & alignment with Communicative Teaching method.
Training, observing and evaluating teachers on curriculum, ACCET (accrediting agency) and school policies.

ESL instructor-

Planning and teaching level 2, level 6 and TOEFL preparation ESL courses to adult international students.
Crafting and implementing formal lesson plans, writing tests, correcting and grading students' work.

Dallas Independent School District, Dallas TX *June '13 – Nov. '13*
4th grade bilingual (Spanish and English) teacher - Alternate Teacher Certification Program

Writing and implementing daily lesson plans for English and Spanish Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.
Monitoring 40+ students learning patterns, behavior, and home life through conferences with parents and fellow teachers. Left program due to illness.

Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics (GIAL), Dallas TX *Jan.'12 – May '12*
Teaching assistant for MA course: Second Language and Culture Acquisition.

Aviation Parts Executive, Fort Lauderdale FL *Jan. '11 – Dec. '11*
Trilingual aviation parts sales and procurement for worldwide Spanish and Portuguese speaking clients.
Phone and email correspondence in Spanish and Portuguese with
clients in Central and South America looking for airplane parts, including the Mexican Armed Forces.

University of North Dakota (SIL), Grand Forks ND *June '10 – Aug. '10*
Teaching assistant for MA courses: Phonology and Field Methods.

Wycliffe Bible Translators/ Sociedade Internacional de Linguística, Mozambique, Africa & Brasilia, Brazil *Aug. '07 – Sept. '10*
Linguist in charge of 15+ languages bi-lingual dictionary program.
Teaching computer programs and elicitation methods.
Organizing and running multiple week-long workshops with four to forty participants in six different cities.
Overseeing all artistic, cultural, and editing aspects of the dictionaries.
Maintaining an in-depth knowledge of Bantu language structure.
Please see
http://lidemo.net/categories/40/search_type/and/order/default/ to see published results. I also spent 3 months
in 3 different cities in Brazil, holding workshop and presentations to recruit Brazilians to go work in Mozambique.

First Student, Iowa City IA *Jan.'06 – June '06*
School Bus Driver and ESL Teacher.
Developed and taught in-depth ESL curriculum for Spanish-speaking co-workers, focusing on work-related issues and their communication with students as bus drivers.

English Tutor, Iowa City, IA *Jan. '01 – May '01*
Tutor for elementary Korean students in reading, writing, and speaking English.

Igreja Baptista de Alecrim, Natal, Brazil *June '01 – Aug. '01*
ESL teacher through church program.

Education

Stillbirthday Certified Obstetric Grief and Bereavement Doula *In Progress*

DONA Certified Doula/Labor Assistant - Member #1471978

Community Health Worker License - Iowa Department of Public Health

Languageline LLA eLPT-Spanish & eLPT-Portuguese - Oral Exam scored a 5+ (Advanced High) on each exam '23

Dallas Independent School District, Dallas TX. Alternative Teacher Certification Program for Dual Language Program. '13
One summer of intensive classes plus three months of in-class and online training completed.

TESOL Certification Course – LinguaEdge.com. TESOL certificate #H790551 '13

Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics, Dallas TX. Completed 9 hours graduate coursework in Applied Linguistics. '12

University of North Dakota – **Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) Grand Forks ND** summers '06-'12
32 hours graduate coursework in Applied Linguistics.

University of New Mexico, Albuquerque NM – BA in Foreign Language/Linguistics, Summa Kum Laude '03 – '05

University of Iowa, Iowa City IA - BA course work in Theater, Portuguese and Para-Medicine '01 – '03

Language Proficiency/ Related Experiences

Languages:

Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.

Volunteer:

Medical Translation, Juarez, Mexico, monthly Aug. '03 – Dec.'05

President of the International Student Ministries, Baptist Student Union -UNM, Albuquerque, NM Aug. '03-Dec.'05

Esperanza Orphanage, Juarez, monthly Aug. '03- Dec. '05
Spanish ministry assistant, Cristo Rey Presbyterian Church, Dallas, TX Mar. '13 – Feb. '17.
ESL Teacher Casa del Lago Jan-May '22
World Relief N. Texas - Afghan Refugee Assistant Nov.'21 - Dec.'22
International Maternal Services & Food Assistance, Resurrection Assembly of God, Iowa City, IA Mar.’23-Current
Iowa City Free Medical & Dental Clinic May’23-Current