



Press Release

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GLOBAL WOMEN'S HEALTH LEADER HOLOGIC SUPPORTS NEW ELLIE FUND BREAST CANCER CARE INITIATIVE

BOSTON, April 20, 2022. [Ellie Fund](#), a Needham-based nonprofit dedicated to providing essential services to breast cancer patients, has received \$110,000 from the medical technology innovator Hologic for its Equitable Pathways to Breast Cancer Care Patient Self-Referral Platform.

Hologic is a global leader in women's health, with products, research, and outreach initiatives that enable greater preventive care through early detection, diagnosis, and treatment.

Equitable Pathways is designed to find and serve more of the breast cancer patients who face barriers to accessing care, which leads to missed appointments, treatment delays, and worsened health outcomes. The self-referral platform is a critical move to empower patients to apply for services directly, as social workers and patient navigators are unable to reach every patient. This new way to access Ellie Fund services will be designed to welcome patients across languages and cultures and enable more patients to adhere to their treatment plans. The platform will have its initial launch on May 10, during National Women's Health Week (May 8-14, 2022).

"Hologic brought the world's first 3D mammography system to market, we provide a comprehensive continuum of breast care, and we are making the biggest effort in our company's history to reduce healthcare disparities for underserved women through our Project Health Equality initiative. We share Ellie Fund's commitment to helping breast cancer patients and its focus on increasing healthcare access for Black and Hispanic women in Massachusetts, so we are thrilled to increase our support for the organization," said Dru Greenhalgh, a vice president and head of corporate philanthropy at Hologic.

Hologic's grant – made through its charitable foundation – will enable establishment of Ellie Fund's new self-referral platform. Due to the limited number of social workers and patient navigators at hospitals and because of differing cultural views including stigma and privacy, many Black and Hispanic patients are not offered support services to help them in their breast

cancer journey. A self-referral platform will help address these issues and remove barriers for patients when accessing support services.

Ellie Fund has increasingly focused on the long-standing systemic disparities in access to breast cancer treatment that affect patients and families in Massachusetts. A recent Boston-based study, for instance, shows that Black, Non-Hispanic women and Medicaid-insured individuals are two to three times more likely to have treatment delays, compared to White or privately insured women. Nationally, Black women under age 65 with breast cancer have a 78% higher death rate compared to White women, despite similar screening rates.

While Ellie Fund works hard to make our services welcoming and widely visible, only 34% of their patients identify as minorities, while 69% of Massachusetts patients are people of color. Breast cancer services are reaching disproportionately few minority patients, leaving too many women lacking resources to survive a disease that should be curable 70% of the time.

In response, Ellie Fund launched its Equitable Pathways to Breast Cancer Care initiative to identify those women whose breast care is disproportionately impacted by what is known as Social Determinants of Health -- including race/ethnicity, education, employment, social support networks, citizenship, access to health care, and more -- that create or reinforce barriers to care.

The Equitable Pathways initiative includes:

- Expanded Hospital Collaborations and patient access points to Ellie Fund services
- Creating Partnerships with all 52 Community Health Centers in Massachusetts where many patients are diagnosed
- A Self-Referral Platform helping patients overcome cultural and privacy barriers, empowering them to connect directly with Ellie Fund
- Clinical Trials Integration, offering Ellie Fund services in recruitment for clinical trials to increase participation and encourage greater diversity in clinical and research data

“Equitable Pathways is Ellie Fund’s approach to addressing the very serious matter of disparities in breast cancer care and outcomes. Our initiative offers solutions for underserved patients who need support services to ensure they can access and adhere to their breast cancer treatment plans,” said Ellie Fund Executive Director Meredith Mendelson

ABOUT ELLIE FUND

Ellie Fund is a Needham-based nonprofit dedicated to providing essential services such as grocery gift cards, transportation to treatment and meal delivery to breast cancer patients residing or receiving treatment in Massachusetts regardless of economic circumstances. Even those who are fully employed and fully insured need a community and support. Each year, 7,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in Massachusetts.

ABOUT HOLOGIC

Hologic, Inc. is a global medical technology innovator primarily focused on improving women’s health through early detection and treatment. Its advancements include creation of the world’s

first commercial 3D mammography system to fight breast cancer; leadership in testing for cervical cancer, sexually transmitted infections, respiratory illnesses and the virus that causes COVID-19; and minimally invasive surgical technologies for uterine fibroids and abnormal uterine bleeding. The company also champions women through the [Hologic Global Women's Health Index](#), which provides a science-backed data roadmap for improving women's well-being, and [Project Health Equality](#), which elevates awareness, research insights and access to quality care for underserved women.

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