



The Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Cancer Services Program

On January 15, LEAD members and guests attended an educational presentation highlighting the Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Cancer Services Program. The Learning Session was led by Dr. James Fahner, HDVCH Hematology/Oncology Division Chief, and Dr. Diana Bitner, OB/GYN and owner of True Women's Health, specializing in gynecology, menopause medicine, sexual health, and cancer survivorship.

One in every 165 Americans, between the ages of 15 and 30, will develop some form of aggressive cancer. AYA exists to serve the complex, challenging and unmet needs of these adolescents and young adults who find themselves living with and surviving this diagnosis. By providing comprehensive, innovative wrap-around services in two phases, including a multidisciplinary care team, the program focuses on:

- Quality of life
- Psychosocial support
- Oncofertility
- Long-term disease surveillance
- Services for late effects caused by treatments

AYA patients have complex psychosocial, educational, and emotional needs. To fulfill these needs, phase one incorporates professional and peer-to-peer counseling, support services, preserving reproductive options and sexual health. In phase two, attention is focused on transitions, clinical trials and fighting the financial toxicity of cancer care.

In addition, we had the pleasure of hearing from Ellie Wilcox, a courageous cancer survivor, mother and wife. At age 17, Ellie was a typical high school senior. She loved hanging out with friends and was excited to decide which college to attend. However, her life was put on pause when she was diagnosed with leukemia. Today, because of a positive outlook that guided her throughout this journey, she is 17 years cancer free and after years of not knowing if she could ever have a child, her and her husband, Travis, welcomed their sweet daughter, Quinn, into the world. Ellie has become an advocate of the AYA program to provide hope to young cancer patients and survivors.

As more pediatric and young adult cancer patients are surviving their diagnosis, the AYA age range population is continuing to increase. Your support will help provide wrap-around services that address quality of life issues, psychosocial support, oncofertility and other long-term health implications for our young cancer patients. Please consider allocating your LEAD gift for 2020 to the Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Services Program.

