

Minnesota Non-Profit Launches Oncology-Focused Initiative to Reach Medically Underserved Communities Via FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program



Gilda's Club Twin Cities became the first CSC network partner to go live with Equiva ACP Connect.

The [Cancer Support Community \(CSC\)](#) is the largest professionally led nonprofit cancer support network worldwide. With 190 network partner locations, including CSC sites and Gilda's Clubs named for the late Saturday Night Live star Gilda Radner, the Cancer Support Community is dedicated to easing the burden of cancer and eliminating barriers to care through individual and community support, education and advocacy.

Specific to health equity, the following appears at the organization's website:

"The time is long overdue to take what we have known about health care and cancer care disparities and convert that knowledge into action. We are focused on creating solutions to improve health services and outcomes for communities whose members are disproportionately affected by cancer."

Exemplifying this commitment to health equity is CSC's [focus on creating a new industry standard](#) for digital cancer support as announced in December 2022 along with a partnership with [Equiva Health](#), a digital health platform provider and leader in patient engagement innovation. An early initiative centers on [the Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\)](#), specifically to make important cancer support and education resources more readily available to people who would neither be able to afford nor have access to broadband and devices.

While the use of [tele-mental health services](#) experienced rapid growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, disparities in access to broadband and usage were also exposed. As CSC looked beyond the pandemic, they saw opportunity to continue leveraging tele-mental health services to break down barriers to care and advance health equity.

In April 2023, [Gilda's Club Twin Cities](#) became the first CSC network partner to go live with [Equiva ACP Connect](#), with the goal of reaching medically under-resourced and under-connected communities across the state of Minnesota in both urban and rural settings. An estimated 34,380 Minnesotans will be diagnosed with cancer this year.

Equiva and Gilda's Club Twin Cities are collaborating to ensure that eligible households receive monthly discounts on broadband service as well as tablets preloaded with CSC resources. These easy-to-use tablets are pre-configured using [Equiva software](#) to provide digital access to virtual cancer support groups, healthy lifestyle education, cancer treatment information, and other resources. The tablets make important services readily available to those who qualify – anytime and anywhere via an intuitive, single-screen interface.



As part of the program, Gilda's Club Twin Cities also uses the [Cancer Support Source®](#), a scientifically validated digital distress, depression and anxiety screener with automated referral. Screener results enable identification of highest acuity patients and improve timeliness in addressing the needs of individuals who could benefit from specific emotional support services or resource referrals.

Gilda's Club Twin Cities has several outreach programs in place to educate healthcare providers, community organizations and the public about the important role the ACP is playing to ensure at-risk individuals can readily access oncology-specific digital offerings.

As of April 2023, Equiva and CSC are working with a select group of CSC network partner locations across the U.S. to plan and launch this program to reach an array of medically under-resourced communities including Hispanic, rural, American Indian and more.

Innovative efforts like these support the vision of the [White House's Cancer Moonshot](#) -- to reduce the cancer death rate by 50% within 25 years -- as well as [The National Cancer Plan](#), announced in April 2023 by the NIH and National Cancer Institute to provide a framework for everyone to collaborate in ending cancer as we know it today. One of its goals is the elimination of inequities, also a goal of the [CancerX initiative](#) unveiled in late March by Moffitt Cancer Center and the Digital Medicine Society.

Equiva makes its [ACP Connect program](#) available via a [partnership launched in February 2023 with Infiniti Mobile](#), an FCC-approved ACP internet service provider. Utilizing the best 4G network to provide nearly full coverage across all 50 states and Puerto Rico, [Infiniti Mobile](#) takes great pride in being associated with both the Lifeline and Affordable Connectivity Programs offered via the FCC.



About Equiva Health

Equiva provides a health relationship management (HRM) platform to help healthcare organizations drive health improvement and financial success by developing and retaining long-term customer relationships. The HRM platform blends unique aspects of patient engagement, care management, and marketing in a framework that bridges data analytics with education and behavioral science-driven methodologies – to purposefully mobilize intelligence-driven action among consumers, patients, their loved ones, and members of the care team. Equiva solutions serve thousands of individuals across more than 800 deployments in dozens of health systems including Mount Sinai, Northwell, Providence and Hackensack Meridian as well as leading nursing home and non-profit community organizations.

<https://equivahealth.com>