Background:
- Financial hardship associated with a cancer diagnosis can impact access to healthcare, treatment adherence, and overall quality of life
- Family Reach, a national nonprofit, offers direct financial assistance grants for both medical and non-medical expenses
- Our analysis aimed to assess financial hardship, essential needs, and specific assistance requests amongst grant applicants based on household income level

Methods:
- Analyzed data from applications in March 2021 to February 2022 using descriptive statistics and univariate tests
- Assessed household income across three categories of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL): <150% of FPL, 150-250% of FPL, and >250% of FPL
- Characterized associations between FPL and race/ethnicity, gender, insurance, phase of treatment, self-reported financial concerns, and assistance requests

Results:
- 4077 patients with cancer applied for assistance in the 12-month period: 2398 (59%) were <150% FPL, 845 (21%) were 150-250% of FPL, and 834 (20%) were >250% of FPL
- Lower household income was associated with more food insecurity, higher risk of utilities and phone being shut-off, and increased risk of homelessness (p<0.001)
- Requests for unexpected aid, childcare, funeral expenses, and public transportation were all less common in higher income groups compared to those with incomes <150% FPL
- Requests for assistance with medical expenses and car payments/insurance were more common for those with incomes >150% FPL

Discussion:
- Support needs vary significantly by household income; families affected by cancer close to the poverty threshold had significant difficulties meeting essential needs including food and shelter
- Lack of individualized interventions may decrease effectiveness of aid and fail to fill gaps in financial coverage
- Programs like Family Reach can serve as a blueprint for future financial assistance distribution to address and eradicate financial barriers to optimal cancer outcomes