



## For Immediate Release

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### The Impact of Drug Shortages on Cancer Patients

**Rochester, NY** – A cancer diagnosis is devastating. Hearing that your first choice of treatment is unavailable adds exponentially to the emotional toll. Unfortunately, there have recently been national shortages of certain drugs used during cancer treatment. Two platinum-based chemotherapy drugs commonly used in the treatment of breast and gynecologic (GYN) cancers – carboplatin and cisplatin – have been affected by this shortage crisis.

The Breast Cancer Coalition serves individuals who have received a breast and/or gynecologic cancer diagnosis, and many are in active treatment when they access programs and support. The shortages have had real impacts on local community members in treatment for cancer, including individuals who utilize the Coalition's services.

Robin F., a Coalition program participant, has been living with recurrent endometrial cancer since 2019. Last June, her oncologist told her that her carboplatin regimen would be switched to cisplatin due to the national shortages. "I was angry," recalls Robin. "I was told that there was a shortage [of carboplatin] and what little was available would be reserved for children." While on carboplatin, Robin experienced regression of her disease until it could not be detected. After switching to cisplatin, she faced progression of her disease more than once.

Fortunately, her treatment has been changed again to a non-platinum chemotherapy regimen that appears to be helping. However, Robin's experience is indicative of a larger problem surrounding supply chains and an unreliable system for manufacturing and delivering generic medications.

While it is easy to draw attention to the drug shortages themselves, it is essential to focus on the impacts those shortages have on the lives of individuals going through cancer treatment. Robin and countless other survivors deserve better when it comes to their treatment options.

To learn more about survivors' stories like Robin's, pick up the Coalition's quarterly newsletter, *Voices of the Ribbon*, or visit [BCCR.org](http://BCCR.org) for more information.

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The Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester's mission is to cultivate community among those touched by breast or gynecologic cancer; to empower informed decision-making through education, support, and advocacy; and to advance research in our region with the goal of eradicating breast cancer.