



ABDOMINAL CANCERS ALLIANCE

2024 IMPACT REPORT

Abdominal Cancers Alliance is an initiative of Partners for Cancer Care and Prevention, EIN 45-1605551

Our Mission

To empower and connect the abdominal cancers community to save and improve lives.

Our Vision

A future where every abdominal cancer patient receives appropriate and timely care throughout their cancer journey.

Our Focus on Advanced Abdominal Cancers

We are committed to saving lives and improving quality of life by connecting patients, survivors, and caregivers to the information and support that they need in their fight against abdominal cancers, including rare and advanced gastrointestinal and gynecologic malignancies. We are patients and survivors, caregivers and families, clinicians, and organizations - all working together to shift the paradigms keeping so many from reaching the care they need in time. By raising awareness with the public and clinicians, making connections to resources and care, and guiding patient and caregiver navigation throughout the cancer journey, we aim to see that every patient reaches the care they need.



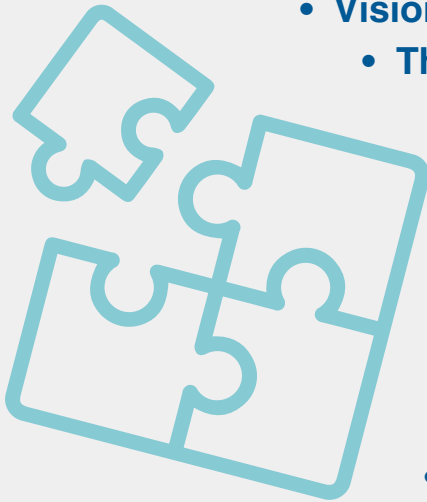
About Abdominal Cancers

Abdominal cancers refers to malignancies that originate in numerous organs in the abdomen and often spread throughout the abdominal cavity, or the peritoneum. Also referred to as peritoneal carcinomatosis or as peritoneal metastases, it is the spread of cancer in the abdominal cavity that may or may not involve solid organs such as the liver, spleen, and lymph nodes. That spread of cancer is caused by peritoneal surface malignancies, which can originate from a wide variety of tumors, including origins in the appendix, colon, rectum, stomach, ovaries, uterus, and peritoneum, among others.

2024: An Incredible Year of Building

2024 was a year of building tremendous momentum and growth. We began the year by vision casting with our Board of Directors and developing a focused strategic plan of work. We identified critical needs of patients and caregivers and deepened our ties with partner organizations and top medical professionals in the field. Our awareness efforts took a major leap forward with the launch of a new website and strengthening our social media presence with campaigns to educate and engage. We refined our operational foundation by implementing deeper accounting and financial analysis, including revising the depth of our operating budget. We improved our development strategies by growing our donor base, strengthening our fundraising activities, and cultivating new partners. These enhancements allow us to steward our resources more effectively, make data-informed decisions, and operate with greater transparency and efficiency. Most importantly, these successes allow us to scale our activities and sustain our momentum as we grow forward.

- **Market Research and Needs Assessment**
- **Vision Casting and Strategic Plan of Work**
 - **Three New Board Members and Two New Staff Members**
 - **New CRM and Donation Platform**
 - **Expanded Financial Stewardship and Investment of Reserves**
 - **Stronger Development and Fundraising Strategies**
 - **Successful Completion of Breast and Cervical Cancer Program**
 - **Launch of the Alliance Website**
 - **Publication of Library of Resources**
 - **Partnerships with Associated Organizations**
 - **Stories of Hope**
 - **Patient and Caregiver Network**



Every step brought us closer to our mission: ensuring no one faces an abdominal cancer diagnosis alone or uninformed.

Closing one Chapter, Opening Another

a message from our president

In 2024, we enjoyed great success rolling out the Abdominal Cancers Alliance and we are very excited about that work supporting those facing rare and advanced gastrointestinal and gynecologic cancers. But 2024 also included the successful completion of our breast and cervical cancers program in Cali, Colombia!

Our work in Colombia began as an NGO initiative to improve medical care in Cali, and I am so proud that our program has been fully institutionalized in the local government health infrastructure to sustain the care facilities, staffing, equipment, and expertise necessary to deliver high-quality care. And as we celebrate this major milestone and continue our business of bridging the gap in cancer care, we turn our attention to another area of need that is near and dear to so many in our community: serving patients, caregivers, and families facing rare and advanced abdominal cancers.

Our journey started in the early 2000s when set out to improve medical access in Cali. By the 2010s, we had organized medical missions that provided over 35,000 free medical visits and 3,000 surgical procedures. Recognizing the urgent need for sustainable cancer care, PFCCAP was incorporated in 2011. Since then, we've transformed the model for breast and cervical cancer care in Cali. We implemented a patient navigation system, partnered with organizations like American Breast Care and Soul Ryeders to provide essential product donations, and hosted hundreds of patient support activities that focus on addressing the emotional, social, and economic realities of facing cancer.



Armando Sardi



MORE THAN 35,000 FREE
MEDICAL VISITS



3,000+ FREE SURGICAL
PROCEDURES



2,300+ BREAST BIOPSIES



52,000+ MAMMOGRAMS



30,000+ BREAST
ULTRASOUNDS

In 2017, we worked with our governmental partners at Red de Salud del Norte, a leading health facility in Colombia, to establish a community-based clinic to provide consistent and sustainable local care. Over the years, this clinic has made it possible to provide more than 2,300 biopsies, 52,000 mammograms, and 30,000 breast ultrasounds.

DONATION PARTNERS



American Breast Care is one of the leading producers of mastectomy bras, breast forms, custom prosthetics, post-surgery products & accessories worldwide.

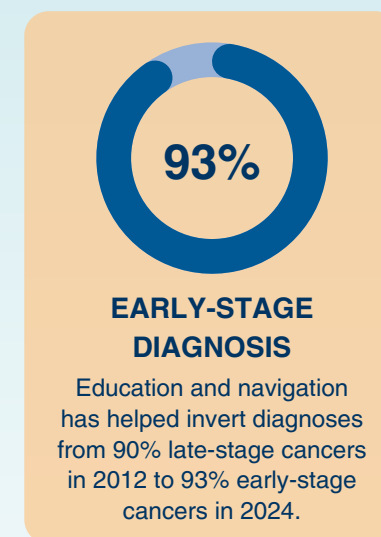
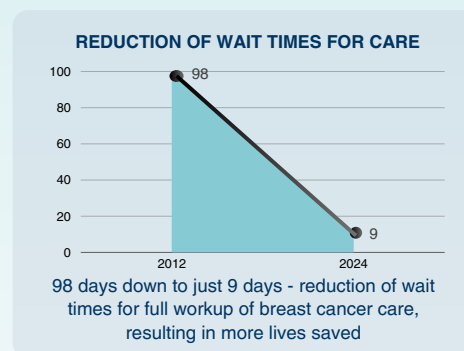
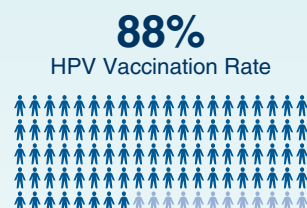
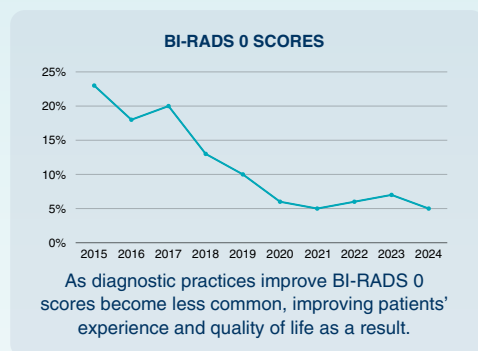
americanbreastcare.com



SOUL RYEDERS provides personalized resources, innovative programs and community support, including the Wigs Without Borders program which helps provide wigs to women with cancer in settings where cancer-related resources are critically lacking.

soulryeders.org

Our education efforts drastically improved early detection, reducing inconclusive mammograms and cutting diagnostic wait times from 98 to just 9 days. Today, 93% of detected breast cancers are in early stages—an incredible reversal from when we started. Additionally, our cervical cancer prevention initiative has successfully vaccinated 88% of participating students against HPV.



In the fight against cancer, there are many gaps in the care provided to cancer patients, caregivers, and their families. We set out to bridge a gap in cancer care for women facing breast and cervical cancer in Cali, Colombia. PFCCAP is proud to have helped close that gap.



As we complete one successful project, we redouble our attention on another gap faced by patients and caregivers facing abdominal cancers with the creation of the Abdominal Cancers Alliance. Thank you to everyone who has supported this organization over the years. Without you, your support, and your vote of confidence in PFCCAP, we never would have been so successful!

We are excited for the future as we continue our work to bridge the gap in cancer care and we invite you to continue this journey with us.

Armando

President and Co-founder, Armando Sardi



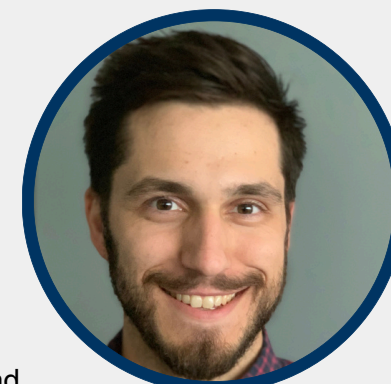
Read the full announcement here

Read More

Responding to the Need

a message from our executive director

The Abdominal Cancers Alliance was created by patients, caregivers, and clinicians who have lived the reality of dealing with abdominal cancers: patients who fought for the right treatment, caregivers who stood by their loved ones, and clinicians who witnessed the gaps in care. Our experiences navigating these overwhelming challenges of misdiagnosis, lack of up-to-date information, limited access to treatment, and insufficient support systems inspired us to build a better path for others. As an appendix cancer survivor and CRS/HIPEC patient myself, I know first-hand the fear, frustration, and uncertainty that come with these diagnoses.



Bo Plantz

Our journeys navigating these rare and advanced abdominal cancers are at the heart of everything that we do. By combining our personal experiences with the insights of a passionate network of supporters and advocates, we approached this work with a deep appreciation of the challenges we're up against as a community facing these cancers:

Inadequate Direction to Treatment

Patients are dying due to misinformation and a lack of awareness about abdominal cancer diagnoses and treatment options. Every day patients are being improperly diagnosed and treated, leading to unnecessary deaths and lowering the quality of life for many.



Lack of Coordination Across the Community

A diverse network of patients and caregivers want to help and be engaged, but need to be equipped and directed. Many who were lucky to find the right path to treatment and the right care providers want to help others on that journey, rather than leave their survival to chance.

Inadequate Support on the Journey

Patients' and caregivers' needs for support throughout the cancer journey are greater than what they receive from their care teams and immediate support systems.



It was with this foundation of understanding and connection to this community that we cast a vision for what a better future for our fellow patients and caregivers could look like. We are committed to raising awareness, creating connections, and guiding navigation for patients and caregivers throughout their cancer journey.



Awareness

We are raising awareness to shift the paradigm of misdiagnosis and treatment of rare and advanced abdominal cancers such that more patients and caregivers find the right path to treatment and the right providers earlier in their journey.



Connection

We are creating connections and serving as the central hub for this community through every stage of the cancer journey, connecting patients and caregivers to organizations, support groups, and professionals.



Navigation

We are empowering patients and caregivers across their journey, from detection and diagnosis through treatment and survivorship.

Through all of this work, we will improve quality and length of life for those facing rare and advanced abdominal cancers by amplifying the best available resources and empowering a diverse network of patients, caregivers, clinicians, and organizations.

Recognizing the importance of investing in systems to support our community, we strengthened our team with new additions to our board of directors including Keera Godfrey Ed.D., Julie Mercer, and Dan McNamara. Additionally, we welcomed new expertise to our staff with the hiring of Amy Hanley to serve as Program Director, bringing over 20 years nonprofit healthcare experience.

Looking back on our growth through 2024, our future is looking brighter than ever. Our successes and opportunities to grow are made possible by partners, supporters, donors, and allies like you. We are grateful for the opportunity to make a difference for so many facing rare and advanced abdominal cancers.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bo Plantz'.

Bo Plantz, Appendix Cancer Survivor and Executive Director

Website Launch

For every patient and caregiver, understanding their diagnosis and what they can do about it is critical to finding the right path forward. Therefore, the first priority of the Abdominal Cancers Alliance was to build a library of resources and launch an expanded website (abdominalcancers.org) to support patients and caregivers in accessing information to find their right path. Built by and for patients and caregivers, the Abdominal Cancers Alliance website is the home for our...

- Library of resources
- Patient and Caregiver Network
- Stories of Hope from patients and caregivers
- Connections to Associated Organizations and Peer Groups

[PFCCAP](#)[Events](#)[News](#)[About](#)[Donate](#)[Resources ▼](#)[Support ▼](#)[Associated Organizations](#)[Get Involved](#)

**We are patients
and caregivers**



Resources

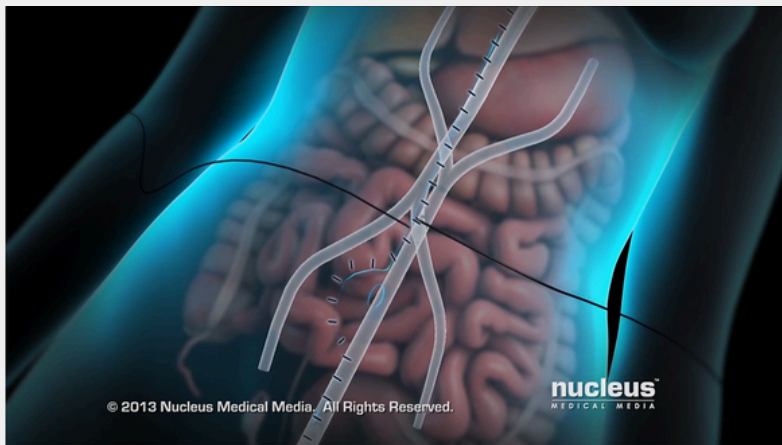
Learn more about an abdominal cancer diagnosis or treatment options with easily digestible information.



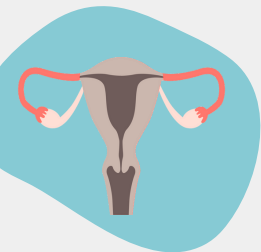
Library of Resources

A key piece of helping patients and caregivers understand their diagnosis is providing educational resources, all produced and vetted by medical professionals alongside patients and caregivers who have already gone through treatment. Our online library of resources is free and available to anyone seeking to understand their cancer and what to do about it, and includes information about abdominal cancer diagnoses, treatment options like the CRS/HIPEC procedure, a glossary of terminology, and frequently asked questions.

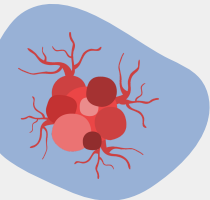
What is Cytoreductive Surgery & HIPEC?



OVARIAN CANCER



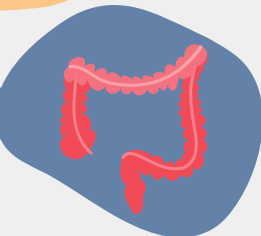
PERITONEAL MESOTHELIOMA



APPENDIX CANCER



COLORECTAL CANCER



Finding a high-quality care provider is critical

How long have you been performing HIPEC? How many procedures have you done / do you perform annually?

- Your outcomes after surgery are directly related to your surgeon's ability to safely remove all of the tumors.
- This requires extensive experience to make safe decisions and have the best chances of achieving complete cytoreduction.
- Some studies have shown that CRS/HIPEC requires a long learning curve, necessitating surgeons to perform over 100 procedures to be considered experts.

Partnering Organizations

The Abdominal Cancers Alliance is proud to work alongside other organizations serving this community and supporting those facing advanced abdominal cancers. We all serve patients and caregivers in complementary ways, but together we form a web of support and connection for all!



ACPMP Research Foundation

The Appendix Cancer and Pseudomyxoma Peritonei Research Foundation funds and supports research to discover new treatments for appendix cancer with the hope of one day finding a cure; and funds and supports educational programs for healthcare professionals and patients/caregivers & families to keep pace with the evolving science and to increase awareness about this rare cancer.

acmp.org

Appendix Cancer Connection

The Appendix Cancer Connection helps provide education, support, and hope to those diagnosed with appendix cancer. It offers educational materials on various types of appendix cancer, treatment options, and survivor stories, aiming to assist patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals in navigating this rare disease.

appendix-cancer.org



Be uninTIMidated

Be uninTIMidated is dedicated to educating, advocating, and providing financial assistance to those affected by rare cancers. The organization funds programs that advance research for rare cancers, supports patients and families with travel expenses for specialized treatments, and raises awareness.

beunintimidated.org



The Laughlin Family Foundation

The Laughlin Family Foundation's mission is to fund initiatives that advance care and research for cancers with limited clinical and patient knowledge, particularly rare gynecologic cancers. Through awareness campaigns, educational programs, and fundraising events, they aim to improve outcomes for patients affected by these underfunded diseases. thelaughlinfamilyfoundation.org

PMP Pals is dedicated to supporting patients diagnosed with pseudomyxoma peritonei (PMP) and related peritoneal surface malignancies. They provide valuable peer support and advocacy to help patients navigate their diagnosis, treatment, and recovery. Through their global network, PMP Pals fosters a sense of community and empowers patients and caregivers with knowledge and connection.

PMP Pals

pmppals.net



SkyHope

SkyHope provides free flights to patients for medical care when traveling for their care requires more than a two-hour drive. They provide these flights through a network of pilots who volunteer their skills and their aircraft. Medical flights can include flights for treatment, surgery, second opinions, clinical trials, and more.

skyhope.org

Triage Cancer

Triage Cancer provides free education on the legal and practical issues that may impact individuals diagnosed with cancer and their caregivers. Educational resources include how to navigate health insurance, finances, work & cancer, legal issues, and much more.

triagecancer.org



United Ostomy Associations of America

The United Ostomy Associations of America promotes quality of life for people with ostomies and continent diversions. It provides resources, education, and advocacy to improve the quality of life for ostomy patients, caregivers, and their families. Through their network of support groups, events, and educational materials, UOAA fosters a community that empowers people to lead active and fulfilling lives.

ostomy.org

Stories of Hope

Everyone has a story to tell and we all have something to learn from others. Find hopeful stories from others who have navigated the cancer journey - share in their hope, learn from them, celebrate with them.



Lorne Johnson,
pictured right

Lorne Johnson, Canada

In 2021, Lorne Johnson was diagnosed with a **rare appendiceal cancer** after noticing a small hernia. Doctors in his home country of Canada deemed him ineligible for CRS/HIPEC and projected a three-year life expectancy. Inspired by stories of other patients fighting similar rare cancers, he sought a second opinion and found the care he needed in the United States. **4 years later**, Lorne is enjoying life in his "Bonus Round," and is an advocate for others to seek multiple opinions.

[read Lorne's story](#)

Helen Szablya, California

In 2009, Helen was diagnosed with **stage IV primary peritoneal cancer** and underwent a 10-hour cytoreductive surgery with hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy (CRS/HIPEC). Through a challenging recovery and a series of chemotherapy treatments, today Helen is a **15-year cancer survivor** and living her life to the fullest!

[read Helen's story](#)



Helen Szablya,
pictured right



Paul Kalusa

Paul Kalusa, Virginia

In 2022, Paul was diagnosed with **stage IV colon cancer** shortly after the birth of his daughter and was given only a few months to live. Determined to fight, Paul underwent aggressive chemotherapy and, thanks to his wife Irene's research, would later undergo CRS/HIPEC. **3 years later**, Paul is cancer-free, raising his daughter, and performing again. In 2023, Paul closed out our Talent Show, helping to build awareness and demonstrate hope.

[watch Paul tell his story](#)

Share Your Story. Share Your Hope.

[Submit Your Story](#)

Patient and Caregiver Network

The Patient and Caregiver Network connects individuals facing cancer with one-on-one human support systems. The Network connects patients and caregivers with others who have walked in their shoes to support them throughout the patient journey. We launched this pilot program in 2024 and were proud to have already made more than 50 connections between patients, caregivers, and volunteers eager to support others on their cancer journey.

Patients and Caregivers on their participation in the Network

"For the short time I have been involved with this program, I feel very supported. And I feel as though I am making a difference for others and hope to continue to do so."

- Anonymous participant

"I feel that we are able to communicate openly about our journey... We both have agreed that we don't want our relationship to be just about our cancer. We want to take the time and do fun things. To take our mind off of our illness and just enjoy some time no matter what that may be."

- Judy, cancer survivor

"I am pleased that I can provide support and assistance to others. My mental health and sense of hope is improved by speaking with other survivors. Being able to ask questions and share experiences with others in similar situations helps normalize this new reality of mine."

- Anonymous participant



Debbie Giese

Patient and Caregiver Network Coordinator

Debbie is a CRS/HIPEC patient and uterine sarcoma survivor. Since her diagnosis and treatment in 2018, she has been a passionate volunteer supporting many patients who have gone through similar treatments on their journey navigating abdominal cancers. Debbie has played a critical role developing the Patient and Caregiver Network and helping to connect patients and caregivers to bolster their support systems as they navigate their journey.

[read more about Debbie here](#)

Remembering Dr. John Singer

2024 marked not only exciting milestones for Partners for Cancer Care and Prevention - the year also included the passing of our longtime colleague, dear friend, and Co-founder, Dr. John Singer.

Dr. John Singer and his wife Ruth founded PFCCAP alongside Dr. Armando Sardi in 2011, building on years of successful medical missions to Colombia. Since its inception, John was deeply involved in the organization and its surgical services in Colombia and ensuring exceptional standards of care for under-resourced and under-served communities. In his career leading up to his leadership with PFCCAP, John served as the head of the surgical residency program at Saint Agnes Hospital in Baltimore for nearly thirty years. John was an accomplished writer and editor of a national academic surgery journal, and an experienced leader of his peers with a six-year tenure as the governor of the Maryland Chapter of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Singer's career as a physician specializing in surgery, oncology, and endocrinology, and a life-long commitment to education and mentorship, spanned nearly sixty years.



Dr. Armando Sardi, Co-Founder and President of Partners for Cancer Care and Prevention, said, "It is with great sadness that I announce the passing of our friend and fellow Board Member, John Singer. John was a co-founder and leader in our work for nearly twenty years and we are thankful for his outstanding leadership, friendship, guidance and wisdom. He will be greatly missed by the PFCCAP family, the cancer care community, and the many, many lives he touched over so many years."

When John was asked why he is so tireless in his dedication to serving others, he stated: "I feel that it is very important for the more fortunate to give back, to leave the planet better than we found it." John was always an outstanding example of this and it was a driving force that led to the creation of PFCCAP. With Dr. Singer's leadership in service to patients in Colombia, PFCCAP achieved great things, including: providing direct medical services to thousands of patients, performing thousands of surgical procedures, conducting hundreds of patient navigation and support events and activities, and developing a remarkable model for breast cancer care difficult to come by even in the United States.

We ask you to join us in remembering John Singer as we honor his life and career of love and compassion. We celebrate his love of food and art and appreciating the beauty all around us. We cherish his sharp wit and (often unfiltered!) humor. And we carry forward his deeply held belief in the importance of service to others and the enduring value of community.

May we all embody John's spirit of love without borders.

Thank You to Our Supporters

The generosity of your support makes our work possible and advances our mission!

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Pictured left to right: Karen Druffel, Armando Sardi, Dan McNamara, Linda McLaughlin, Bo Plantz



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