

Robert Walters  
Bangor

I was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia in March of 2019. I started chemotherapy at Eastern Maine Medical Center and was referred to Dana Farber Institute to receive a Bone Marrow Transplant. I received my Transplant on June 25th 2019. After all was said and done during the months of March to August of 2019 my medical bills exceed 1.5 million dollars after insurance paid their part. Fortunately the state of Maine classified me as working disabled and I was to qualify for MaineCare during the months of my treatment and transplant. However I no longer qualify as that because my employment status was terminated due to exceeding the amount of Medical Leave available to me and the fact that my wife is now a full time nurse again. In August of 2020 after 14 months of remission, my leukemia recurred and low dose chemotherapy was started along with additional infusions from donor were started. Thankfully most of my treatment since August has been outpatient so our bills have not been too astronomical. However in March, April and May of 2021 I've spent nearly six weeks back in the hospital, both in Eastern Maine and at Dana Farber/Brigham and Women's dealing with a transplant complication known as Graft Versus Host Disease. This is a complication that has no cure is treated by lessening the symptoms present so that they don't affect my quality of live. With that being said many of the treatments that I could need or are currently using are newer and my insurance company requires extra work from treatment. My wife and I live with the knowledge that there may come a point where I might have to opt out of treatment due to the inability to pay. Universal Health Care for All Mainers would help many such as myself get the best treatment available without have to worry money. The year is 2021 and access to healthcare is a human right and the right thing to do is to ensure that ALL have access to healthcare they need regardless of their economic standing. Please do what is best of the people of this state and vote in favor of Universal Health Care Coverage.