American Cancer Society Offers Free Housing to Coronavirus Health Care Workers Through Hope Lodge Program

ATLANTA, April 3, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, today the American Cancer Society (ACS) announced that its Hope Lodge facilities around the country will be made available for health care workers on the front lines of the coronavirus fight -- at no cost -- through the health care systems they are affiliated with.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to help the health care community as we all continue to adapt to keep pace with the escalating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Gary M. Reedy, chief executive officer at the American Cancer Society. "Making the decision to close our Hope Lodge facilities to cancer patients was extremely difficult. It is gratifying to be able to now offer these rooms to provide respite for health care workers who are making tremendous personal sacrifices to be on the frontlines treating patients, and we hope these accommodations will help."

On March 27, 2020, ACS made the heartbreaking decision to suspend operations for the Hope Lodge program. Due to the growth of the pandemic, the organization could no longer ensure the health and safety of its immune-compromised cancer patient residents, nor of its volunteers and staff -- and more than 30 facilities across the country were forced to close.

Because ACS suspended its Hope Lodge program, it now has rooms that can provide respite for frontline health care workers for rest between shifts or if returning home is too difficult. As many health systems are now turning to community partners for support – ACS is ready to help and has a unique opportunity to assist with temporary lodging. The growing reality is that many health care workers are unable to return home each night due to long shifts and fear of exposing their families to the COVID-19 virus. In 2019, the American Cancer Society network of Hope Lodge facilities, which include 1,174 rooms, provided 500,000 nights of free lodging to more than 29,000 patients and caregivers.

In addition to providing full access to Hope Lodge facilities, ACS has launched the Hope Lodge COVID-19 Response Fund to support these efforts, and to help provide the resources necessary to repurpose and operate our Hope Lodge facilities during the COVID-19 crisis. It will also ensure that Hope Lodge facilities are ready to accept cancer patients again in the coming months and help ACS to continue with vital programs to help cancer patients during this pandemic.

Cancer hasn't stopped, so neither has the American Cancer Society. During this unprecedented time, it remains committed to the needs of cancer patients, who are more vulnerable than ever in the face of COVID-19. Throughout this epidemic, the ACS mission matters more than ever, as the organization continues to provide help and resources to cancer patients, families, caregivers and health care providers. This includes being available 24/7 through our helpline (800-227-2345) and through the "COVID-19 and Cancer" resources at cancer.org/coronavirus.

To learn more about ACS resources and programs for cancer patients during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to support the ACS mission, visit cancer.org.

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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