

A Prescription for the Rest of One's Life

by Richard B. Reiling, MD, FACS

The focus of my ACCC presidency (2007-2008) has been survivorship. Cancer survivorship is not a new concept to cancer patients or to oncology care providers. However, the process of providing comprehensive survivorship programs is new. The Institute of Medicine's (IOM) recent report, *From Cancer Patient to Cancer Survivor: Lost in Transition*, set out both the problems and the challenges we face as we strive to provide the support and services our survivors want and need.

In my President's Message column for *Oncology Issues*, I have written about a survivor's need for "A Prescription for the Rest of One's Life." As both an oncology surgeon and a cancer survivor myself, I view the need from both perspectives. And as a cancer survivor looking forward to the rest of my life, I am mindful that survivorship encompasses more than just the cancer patient and his or her healthcare providers—it involves the patients' family, friends, and caretakers, as well.

With this special supplement on Survivorship, ACCC brings together practical resources and tools to help community oncology programs respond to the need for comprehensive survivorship services. Included are ACCC's Cancer Program Guidelines new section on "Survivorship Services," which outline optimal survivorship components within a comprehensive cancer program.

As the model programs described in this supplement make clear, innovative survivorship efforts are already underway at ACCC member institutions—ranging from small community hospitals to large community health systems.

Currently, there are 12 million cancer survivors in the United States. Unfortunately, almost all of us will either be a survivor of cancer or closely related to a loved one with cancer. ACCC is committed to serving as a resource for helping all of its member facilities to develop comprehensive survivorship programs. We trust that this supplement will be the springboard for providing your center the tools to help you do just that.



The art becomes a valuable tool with which to enter the unconscious, to express what words often cannot.

—Lori Nathan, ATR
Art Therapist at the Center for
Cancer Care at Exeter Hospital
(See page S21 for more.)

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