Survivorship starts at the time of diagnosis and continues throughout the rest of the patient’s life.

Survivorship means fighting hard and 120 cancer survivors and family members attested to that fight by celebrating at our 7th Annual Survivorship Night on Friday, September 12 at the Lowell Senior Center.

This event was an inspirational time to share cancer survivor stories, participate in a candle light ceremony, have a free massage, enjoy food, music, raffle prizes and much more. The highlight of the evening was our guest speakers - three of our cancer patients and a motivational speaker.

A wonderful meal was provided by our Food and Nutrition Services team and ice cream was donated by Trinity Emergency Medical Service.

Caregivers’ Corner
Things You Should Know

1) Communicate openly.
Healthy communication between you and your loved one living with cancer can reduce frustration and help both of you manage difficult emotions. Everyone communicates differently, so use various techniques including gestures, expressions and tough. Be realistic and flexible in your communication, and take cues from your loved one.

2) Educate yourself.
Many cancer patients may not understand or able to digest the medical information being presented. It is normal to feel unprepared, but many resources exist that can help increase your understanding. Take notes and ask questions during medical visits. Reputable cancer education websites can also help you self-educate.

Please contact any of our three social workers for assistance. We are here to help.

Meg Lemire-Berthel, MSW
Heidi Parker, LICSW
Dalila Sequeria, LICSW

SAVE THE DATE

TeamWalk Cancer Center Open House
Saturday, April 11 from 9 am - noon
Come share your TeamWalk and patient stories. Children’s activities will be available.

TeamWalk for CancerCare
Sunday, May 31, 2015
Getting the Flu Shot

Flu season is coming and we are in full swing into the process of getting vaccinated for seasonal flu. Being proactive! Receive the flu vaccine protects not only the person receiving the shot, but family members, co-workers and friends from contracting the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people get vaccinated as soon as possible, as it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against the flu. There are three different flu vaccines available: Fluzone, a pediatric vaccine for children aged 6 months through 35 months; Fluarix, a vaccine for children and adults ages 3 to 64; and Fluzone High Dose, a trivalent vaccine that has four times higher the concentration for adults who are 65 years old and older.

High-Risk Individuals

Vaccination is especially important for people at higher risk for serious flu complications and their close contacts (i.e., family members, friends and co-workers). High-risk individuals include all children aged 6 months through 59 months, all persons aged 50 years and older, adults and children who have chronic pulmonary disorders (including asthma), cardiovascular disease (except isolated hypertension), renal, hepatic, neurologic, hematologic or metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus), persons who have immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV infection), women who are or will be pregnant during the influenza season, children and adolescents (aged 6 months through 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye’s syndrome after influenza virus infection, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, American Indians/Alaska Natives, and persons who have a BMI greater than 39.

Infants and Children

Children between 6 months and 8 years of age may need to receive two doses of flu vaccine to be fully protected. Those children who will need two doses of vaccine should receive the first dose as soon as possible to allow time to get the second dose before the start of the flu season. The two doses should be given at least four weeks apart. This year, the CDC is recommending the use of the nasal spray vaccine for children 2 to 8 years old who do not have a medical condition that predisposes them to influenza complications. Children younger than 6 months are at higher risk of serious flu complications, but are too young to get a flu vaccine. Because of this, safeguarding them from flu is especially important. If you live with or care for an infant younger than 6 months of age, you should get a flu vaccine to help protect them from flu.

In addition to getting vaccinated, you and your loved ones can take everyday preventive actions like staying away from sick people and washing your hands to reduce the spread of germs. If you are sick with flu, stay home from work or school to prevent spreading the flu to others. Getting the flu vaccine is a great way to protect yourself, your family, coworkers and friends from getting the flu.

Sources: CDC.gov and FDA.gov

Manufacturer Patient Assistance Program

The Oncology Social Work Department will highlight assistance programs in each edition of the 2015 Sharing is Caring newsletter.

- Amgen, Inc. offers a co-pay coupon program to help commercially-insured, eligible patients with deductibles, co-insurance, and/or co-payment requirements for Neulasta and Nplate. Call (888) 657-8371 or visit www.amgenfirststep.com for more details.

- Bristol-Myers Squibb offers a program to assist with out-of-pocket co-pays or co-insurance requirements for eligible, commercially-insured patients for Droxia, Etopophos, Erbitux and Sprycel. Call (800) 861-0048 or visit www.bmsaccesssupport.com/contact.aspx for more details.