

INSPIRATION

in(t)-spe-'rā-shen *n* 1. a divine or supernatural influence 2. to be an animating, enlivening, or exalting influence on another; to spur one to act 3. to draw forth or bring out

Strength for Caring Success: Noemi Peterson, RN

by Kelly Desatnik

Family members and other caregivers of cancer patients are often desperate, overtaxed and isolated. They need validation and simple tools to help them cope in a healthier way. The Strength For Caring (SFC) Program addresses these complex needs of the patient caregiver.

This community-based program is free of charge and provides comprehensive education and support for caregivers on topics such as, understanding cancer and its treatment and managing patient symptoms (See page 18 for more information). In many instances, SFC programs have had repeat participants who felt they had gained so much from the program, that they brought other family members/friends to the next event.

A Nurse Making the Difference

Noemi Peterson, an RN in Houston, Texas

has been extremely successful in starting the SFC Program in her region. According to Noemi, "The participants gain so much from the program. I see them leave with such a different understanding and renewed strength. The supporting institutions and clinics also love it because it helps them help their patients."

For years, Noemi offered SFC programs in Bryan, TX, in conjunction with St. Joseph's Hospital's Healthy Communities program. Noemi has also seen success with SFC at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, where her team facilitated the programs for several years. Staff members were invited to participate and they have since taken it over and now offer various one-hour programs at "The Place of Wellness," addressing caregiver issues.

Most recently, Noemi and her team partnered with American Cancer Society, M.D. Anderson, Leukemia Lymphoma Society,

Sisters' Network and a Patient Advocacy Foundation. They had over 75 participants patients/caregivers and held sessions that were of interest to all.

Future Plans

Currently, Noemi is working with Methodist Hospital to set up bi-monthly SFC programs for the patients/caregivers in the clinics. According to Noemi, "This is a big institution with many of our physicians practicing here - we're very excited about this new opportunity!"

If you would like to participate in facilitator training so you can hold *Strength for Caring* programs at your local health care facility or organization, visit www.strengthforcaring.com and fill out the automated form on the website. You may also call **1-888-I-CARE-80**. OA

RCCS

Oncology Associates is pleased to announce an exciting new resource for your patients: **The Roche Cancer Companion Series**

The RCCS is a collection of patient resources that were developed with the insight and advice of oncology healthcare professionals, caregivers and cancer survivors. This comprehensive set of patient educational materials address patient and caregiver issues in the continuum of cancer care.

The RCCS is comprised of a treatment organizer and four booklets. Samples of each were recently sent to your practice. The following products are available:

1. Treatment Organizer:

A Better Way to Handle It

- > Keep all your information and records in one place
- > Keep track of your progress
- > Record any symptoms, side effects and questions for your treatment plan

2. Cancer Explained: *Step by Step*

- > Information on diagnosing cancer
- > Questions to ask your treatment team

3. Managing the Side Effects of Chemotherapy: *Reach for Help*

- > Common side effects
- > Helpful tips to manage the common side effects
- > When to "Reach for Help" and contact your doctor
- > Questions to ask your healthcare team

4. The Caregiver's Guide: *Side by Side*

- > Helpful tips and suggestions

- > Planning ahead and important decisions to make
- > Useful resources

5. The Emotional Issues of Recurrent Cancer: *Facing the Challenges Again*

- > Reinforcing staying informed and dealing with fear
- > Sources of support
- > Encouragement to looking forward and planning ahead

If you would like to receive additional copies for your office, please contact Oncology Associates at **888-732-7352** or contact your local Roche Oncology Specialist. OA