My “Glass Half-Full” Keeps Spilling

The Mara Mogensen Flaherty Memorial Lecture is generously supported by the ONS Foundation.

While many oncology nurses help their patients mark the end of treatment with celebration, few will follow these same survivors indefinitely. Cancer survivors can now live years, and even decades, after their initial treatments are completed. Yet continued interaction with their oncology nursing caregivers diminishes with time, and the risks and realities of survival are usually an unknown entity. Join Susan Leigh, BSN, RN, an oncology nurse and repeat cancer survivor, to hear the stories and challenges of long-term survivors. She’ll invite all nurses to offer the “gift of preparation” as treatments end.

**Content Area:** General Content

**Content Level:** Advanced

**Coordinator/Speaker:**
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**Full Disclosure:**
Nothing to Disclose

**Objectives:**
At the end of this session, participants will be able to:
1. Describe ways to prepare patients for the realities of survival in both oncology and non-oncology settings.
2. List two new sub-specialties that are helping to improve the quality of life of long-term survivors.
3. Identify need for and components of survivorship care planning.

**Content Outline:**
1. Importance of anecdote and evidence
   A. Anecdote

   1. Lack of understanding risk factors leads to delayed diagnoses and potential treatment.
   2. Most survivors are totally unaware of long-term risk factors.
   3. Survivorship or follow-up clinics are unavailable to majority of survivors.

B. Non-oncology settings
   1. Long-term complications are unknown to many in healthcare, especially non-oncology providers.
   2. Appropriate follow-up information is necessary for timely healthcare interventions.

C. New sub-specialties are improving quality of follow-up care.
   1. Survivorship clinics
   2. Rehabilitation oncology
   3. Cardio-oncology

III. Surviving and thriving and back to surviving
A. Survivors can live years problem-free but may eventually face consequences of diagnosis and treatment.
   1. Keeping “Glass Half Full” can be a challenge when either expected or unexpected problems arise.
   2. Both physical and psychosocial fallout can be mildly annoying to devastating.

B. Offer gifts of preparation as survivors transition into post-treatment stage
   1. Prepare for “optimal wellness.”
      a. Develop and update survivorship care planning.
      b. Identify local and national resources that support cancer survival.
   2. Encourage continued story-telling by long-term survivors.
   3. Teach importance of continued self-advocacy and education.