

Title of Activity: Fostering Resilience for Cancer Survivors

Location of Activity: University of Maryland, Baltimore; School of Nursing Auditorium
Chairpersons: Kenneth Miller, MD; Karen Wickersham, PhD, RN; and Catherine Miller, MSW, LCSW-C

Date: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 from 8 am – 4:30 pm

Intended audience: health care providers, cancer survivors and their support system/care givers

Program Summary:

This survivorship program will provide cancer care providers, survivors, and caregivers an interprofessional forum to learn about strategies to better prepare cancer survivors for the challenges of completing treatment and, hopefully, to not only bounce back but also to “bounce-forward” after cancer. Participants will discuss with physicians, nurses, social workers, nutritionists, physical therapists, and other cancer survivors ways in which survivors, their support systems, and their health care team can build resilience after a diagnosis of cancer throughout their survivorship journey. After participation in the program, attendees will:

Objectives:

1. Build resilience during cancer survivorship,
2. Apply strategies to foster healthy living during cancer survivorship.
3. Apply ethical strategies in caring for cancer survivors.
4. Discuss their role in working as a team in care for cancer survivors.
5. Define compassion fatigue for families during cancer survivorship.

Cancer survivors often finish treatment and are poorly prepared to return to “normal” or a “new normal” that includes chronic management of cancer- and treatment-related effects (e.g., pain, fatigue), which can be severe, debilitating, or permanent. Also, fear of cancer recurrence and worry about late-effects of treatment (e.g., second cancers, infertility) are dominating psychological concerns during the first 1-3 years of survivorship. The Institute of Medicine’s report in 2005, “Cancer Survivors: Lost in Transition” and other publications outline a large gap in the provision of care to cancer survivors who have completed treatment. Aside from physical symptoms that are not addressed or relieved there typically are other issues facing cancer survivors including significant fatigue, cognitive dysfunction, changes in sexuality and intimacy, and changes in their work life.

Resources:

American Cancer Society, Survivorship During and after Treatment:
<https://www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment.html>

Maryland Cancer Collaborative, Guide to Cancer Survivorship and Care:
https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/cancer/cancerplan/Pages/SurvivorshipGuide_PatientResources.aspx

National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, Cancer Survival Toolbox®:

<https://www.canceradvocacy.org/resources/cancer-survival-toolbox/>