

Supportive Services Update

April 2024

Welcome

We are officially into spring, bringing hope of warmer days, green grass and time outside while knowing that there is always the possibility of more cold and snow ahead. We live in Saskatchewan after all.

This month, we celebrate National Volunteer Week. Volunteers play an important role in our cancer centres. Please join us as we recognize and celebrate their contributions.

April 16 is Advance Care Planning Day. Please keep reading for more information about this important topic and consider thinking about, talking about and writing down your wishes.

If you have suggestions for future newsletter issues, don't hesitate to contact us:

Laura O'Brien at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre
306-766-2512

Lindsay Kostyniuk at the Saskatoon Cancer Centre
306-655-2672



What's Inside

- Advance Care Planning Day
- Support Program Update: Virtual Cancer Transitions Program and Dignity Therapy
- National Volunteer Month
- Nutrition Topic: Are Dairy Products Safe to Eat?
- Recipe: Egg Omelet with Cottage Cheese
- Community Spotlight: Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada

Advance Care Planning Day: April 16, 2024

If Not You, Who?

Planning for your future healthcare needs is important. So, we're asking: Do you know what would happen if you couldn't decide for yourself? Who would you trust to make those healthcare decisions for you?

You have the power to choose who that person is. They can be a family member, a friend, or anyone in your life that you trust to make the kinds of healthcare decisions you would want.

Think about who you would trust with making those important decisions for you.

Think about what matters most in your life and how that might help guide someone in making the kinds of healthcare decisions you would want.

The best time to think about this is now when you can make decisions for yourself. We have guides to help you.

Coming Full Circle

Coming Full Circle is an advanced care planning booklet from an Indigenous worldview. It helps you to reflect on your values, beliefs and wishes for care and to share this information with your loved ones and healthcare providers before a medical crisis happens. This booklet will help you think through what is important to you, what concerns you have, and who you would want to make decisions for you if a time comes when you can't make decisions for yourself.



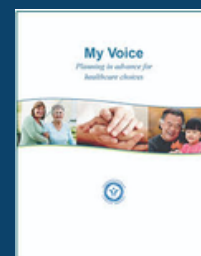
My Voice

My Voice is a guide that provides you with the information you need to make informed choices about your future health care - ahead of time.

It contains useful information on how to make the decisions that are right for you:

- How to hold the discussions with your loved ones who are a necessary part of your future planning
- How to inform your doctor and nearest relatives of your wishes

My Voice also contains a template that you can use to complete an advance care plan.



You can find the above templates at: www.saskcancer.ca/patients-and-families-articles/advance-care-planning or find a copy at your cancer centre.

Program Spotlight

Virtual Cancer Transitions Program

People who have completed their cancer treatment often feel excited or relieved, but for many it's also a time of uncertainty. You may be worried about the cancer coming back, unsure about the future, and wonder what is next.

People who have faced cancer often find that life does not return to the normal they knew before cancer, but to a "new normal", which takes time to figure out.

The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency will be offering a 4-week virtual Cancer Transitions program this spring to help you get back to daily life after cancer treatment. The program aims to provide you the skills to improve and reach your personal goals for better exercise, nutrition, emotional support and medical management. It can help you feel more control over your situation, less alone and have a greater sense of hope and well-being.

The group will be held Wednesday afternoons starting April 25 - May 16. As the group is being held virtually, it is important to have working internet access, along with audio and video.

Jamie Woytiuk and Dana Krushel, both clinical oncology social workers, will be facilitating. To learn more or to register, please call Dana at (306) 655-2777.



Jamie Woytiuk, RSW, BSW



Dana Krushel, RSW, BSW

Dignity Therapy

Dignity Therapy is a brief intervention to help conserve an individual's sense of dignity by addressing sources of psychosocial and existential distress at the end of life. It gives individuals a chance to record the meaningful aspects of their lives and leave something behind that can benefit their loved ones in the future. During an approximately 60 minute session, a trained clinical oncology social worker asks a series of open-ended questions that encourage an individual to talk about their lives or what matters most to them. The conversation is recorded, transcribed, and then edited by the social worker before being returned to the individual, who is given the opportunity to read the transcript and make changes before a final version is produced. This therapy can be done at bedside, with or without the support of loved ones, and in multiple sessions if needed.

If you'd like to book a Dignity Therapy session or have more question on Dignity Therapy, call (306) 655-6811 in Saskatoon or 306-766-2973 in Regina.

Information on Dignity in Care can also be found at www.dignityincare.ca.



National Volunteer Week: April 14-20, 2024

If you've ever been in the Allan Blair Cancer Centre or the Saskatoon Cancer Centre, you have likely seen our volunteers in action. Whether greeting and talking with patients and families, serving refreshments, assisting with wigs and headwear or helping patients get to where they need to go, our volunteers play an important role in the cancer centre and are always happy to help.

This year's theme for National Volunteer Week is: Every Moment Matters. It highlights the importance of every volunteer and each contribution they make at a moment when we need support more than ever. The sharing of time, skills, empathy, and creativity is vital to the inclusivity, strength, and wellbeing of our communities.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a committed group of individuals volunteering in our cancer centres. Please help us celebrate our volunteers this month!



Did You Know?

- We have 56 volunteers, many who have been volunteering for 5+ years. Our longest serving volunteer has been with the cancer centre for 23 years!
- Collectively, volunteers donated 4375 hours of their time in 2023.
- Volunteers assembled and mailed almost 5000 new patient packages last year.
- Volunteers assisted in providing more than 250 wigs and 800 pieces of headwear to patients who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment in 2023.
- On average, volunteers give out approximately 25,000 cookies to patients and families a year!



Nutrition Topic: Are Dairy Products Safe to Eat After a Cancer Diagnosis?

Recently, more people are asking: "Are dairy products safe to eat after a cancer diagnosis?" And the answer is, yes! Dairy products include foods such as milk, yogourt, cheese, and cottage cheese. Dairy products are good sources of nutrients like protein, calcium, and vitamin D. Protein is needed to help keep up your strength and to help your body heal during cancer treatment. Calcium and vitamin D are important for bone health. Eating a variety of dairy products can help you stay strong and healthy during and after cancer treatment!

Fact: Canadian milk does not contain antibiotics or growth hormones. If a dairy cow gets sick and needs to be treated with antibiotics (just like humans do), that milk is thrown away. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency tests all food produced in Canada and sold in Canada to make sure it is safe and meets Canadian standards.

Recipe: Egg Omelet with Cottage Cheese

Ingredients:

- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup full-fat cottage cheese
- ½ tsp dried parsley
- 1 tbsp butter or margarine
- Pepper, to taste



Photo sourced from <https://kirbiecravings.com/souffle-omelette/>

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Separate egg whites from yolks. Beat the egg whites in a bowl until stiff, but not dry.
3. Beat the yolks in a separate bowl until thick. Add the cottage cheese and pepper to the beaten yolks and mix until smooth. Fold (gently mix) the egg whites and parsley to the yolk mixture.
4. Melt margarine in a small, oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Pour the egg mixture into the skillet and cook over medium heat until the omelet is lightly browned on the bottom and fluffy (about 3-4 minutes).
5. Transfer the skillet to the preheated oven and bake for 15 minutes. Remove skillet from the oven. Make a crease down the center of the omelet with a knife and fold the omelet over. Serve immediately.

Makes one serving. Each serving provides 240 calories and 20 grams of protein.

Recipe sourced from: High Calorie Recipes. (2021). Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Have you been unintentionally losing weight or eating less than usual? Do you have specific questions about food and nutrition during or after cancer treatments? Ask your health care team to refer you to a cancer centre dietitian for personalized nutrition advice.

Allan Blair Cancer Centre Groups and Services

Cancer Transitions Program

A 6 week program for patients who have completed cancer treatment. Issues of survivorship, emotional wellness, nutrition, exercise and moving forward after treatment are addressed.

Androgen Deprivation Therapy (ADT) Class

For prostate cancer patients starting on ADT and their partners.

Offered on the 4th Thursday of the month.

Writing Group

A 9 week writing group, meeting once weekly to explore through writing the aspects of cancer, treatment and following. Open to cancer patients receiving treatment and completed treatment.

Dignity Therapy Service

A brief intervention designed to help conserve the dying patient's sense of dignity. It gives patients a chance to record the meaningful aspects of their lives and leave something behind that can benefit their loved ones in the future.

Body Image Group

A 6 week course offered once a week which provides you with insight, support, and the tools necessary to guide you on your way to a healthier you.

Patient Support Centre

Wigs, headwear, and books are available free of charge to cancer patients. Location: Level 1, Monday-Friday 8:00 am-4:00 pm. A volunteer must be present to assist.

Contact Laura O'Brien at 306-766-2512.

One Breath

A five week anticipatory grief group offered to patients and/or loved ones. The group will allow participants to discuss and share their thoughts and feelings surrounding a terminal illness. We will reflect on topics such as coping strategies, legacy work, self care, forgiveness, and creating moments of connection.

A Life Worth Writing

This 4 week virtual expressive writing group provides patients with the opportunity to reflect, process and express their individual and/or collective experiences, which may or may not be directly impacted by their cancer experience.

For more information on all groups, please call 306-766-2973

STAFF REFERRALS TO ABCC GROUPS

Most group referrals can be completed through a reminder on ARIA:

ABCC, ADT Group

ABCC, Anticipatory Group

ABCC, Body Image

ABCC, Dignity Group

ABCC, Transitions Group

ABCC, Virtual Writing Group

ABCC, Writing Group



**Support Services and Programs are made possible
thanks to our generous donors**

Saskatoon Groups and Services

Cancer Transitions Program

A 6 week program for patients who have completed cancer treatment. Issues of survivorship, emotional wellness, nutrition, exercise and moving forward after treatment are addressed.

Call 306-655-2777 to register.

Androgen Deprivation Therapy (ADT)

Class

For prostate cancer patients starting on ADT and their support persons.

To register call Rachelle at (306) 655-7484.

Dignity Therapy Service

A brief intervention designed to help conserve the dying patient's sense of dignity by addressing sources of psychosocial and existential distress. It gives patients a chance to record the meaningful aspects of their lives and leave something behind that can benefit their loved ones in the future. Referrals accepted anytime. Ask to speak with a social worker for more information.

Expressive Arts Therapy

Expressive Arts Therapy uses different methods including writing, music, visual arts (drawing, painting, sculpting) to help people explore, understand and process their emotions and experiences using different forms of art. While one person may like talk therapy, another person may prefer to use journaling, movement, art or a combination of different experiences during therapy. Throughout the year, the Supportive Care department will offer a selection of expressive art therapy sessions. For more information or to put your name on a wait list contact 306-655-2672.

Volunteer Room/Wig Boutique

Wigs, headwear, and books are available free of charge to cancer patients. Location: CG202. Monday-Friday 9:00 am-3:00 pm. A volunteer must be present to assist you. Contact Cindy Beaulé at 306-655-2688.

Stepping Stones - a walking group

Join us for a walk at any pace. Group is held during the spring, summer and fall (no winter group)

location: Queen's House of Retreat, 601 Taylor St. W.

Contact Dana @ 306-655-2777.

Restorative Yoga

A class for patients/support people. Restoration to body, mind, and spirit. Virtual classes run every Saturday from 10:30-11:30am throughout September to June. Call 306-655-2672 to inquire or register

iRest® Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra is a research-based, guided meditation based on the ancient practice of Yoga Nidra (yoga sleep). This meditation uses a clinically proven 10 step protocol effective in reducing stress and anxiety while improving sleep and overall resilience.

Each session will begin with Marie helping you find a restful position for relaxation followed by a guided meditation that will be approximately 45 minutes long. Call 306-655-2672

Saskatoon Cancer Centre Physiotherapy Group

The SCC and Mackie Physiotherapy have joined together to provide a 6 week physio group for our cancer patients. The group is facilitated by physio therapist Melissa Doerksen. This group is for any individual in cancer remission or undergoing cancer treatment. The group will help provide you with strategies and education that can help improve function and quality of life. The group is held on Wednesday afternoons at Mackie Physiotherapy in Saskatoon. The next group starts in May. For more information, call 306-655-6811.

STAFF REFERRALS TO SCC GROUPS

Most group referrals can be completed through a reminder on ARIA:
SCC, ADT Group
SCC, Dignity Therapy
SCC, Transitions Group
SCC, Virtual Writing Group



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Community Spotlight



First Connection Peer Support Program

Sometimes, you may feel completely alone and maybe even misunderstood by your family and friends during your cancer experience. When it happens, it can feel unsettling and isolating, but it is understandable. For those days when it seems like the people who care for you and love you just “don’t get it”, we can help connect you with someone who has been through a similar cancer diagnosis who does.

When you sign up for First Connection, you will be matched with a trained volunteer (peer) who has firsthand experience with a blood cancer. Your match can be determined by age, type of diagnosis, gender (if requested) or the issue that is most concerning to you. Anyone with a blood cancer can connect with a peer who’s been there.

A First Connection volunteer is a blood cancer survivor. As a peer, they are trained to listen and offer a deep level of understanding and insight by sharing their own experience. Talking to a peer can reassure you about what’s ahead.

There is no charge to participate in this program.

To register, go to <https://www.bloodcancers.ca/first-connection-peer-support-program>

If you want to learn about other support groups within Saskatchewan, go to www.saskcancer.ca or use the QR code here.

