

ONS Publishing Division Policy Regarding Letters to the Editor: Selection of letters to be published in Letters to the Editor is the decision of the editor. For acceptance, letters must be signed. A letter can appear anonymously if requested by the author. All letters are subject to editing.

A letter that questions, criticizes, or responds to a previously published *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing* article automatically will be sent to the author of that article for a reply. This type of collegial exchange is encouraged. Letters that question, criticize, or respond to an Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) policy, product, or activity will appear in *ONS Connect* and automatically will be sent to the ONS Board of Directors for a reply. Send letters to CJONEditor@ons.org.

Student and Survivor Appreciates Article on Psychosocial Care

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to the research presented. I read with much interest the article titled, “Cancer Survivorship: Meeting Psychosocial Needs” (Kaplan, 2008). My family is currently experiencing issues related to psychosocial needs. Meeting psychosocial needs is unique to cancer survivors, and in recent years the number of cancer survivors has grown. It also is important to address the psychosocial needs of family members, friends, and caregivers. It is unfortunate that the psychosocial needs of cancer survivorship go unmet; however, the findings of the research presented are helpful in addressing a solution to this issue. In 2005, the Lance Armstrong Foundation conducted a poll of 1,000 cancer survivors and found that nearly half felt that their nonmedical needs were unmet (Hart, 2007).

I was pleased to find the topic so well defined. The article presented the phases of survival, barriers to meeting the psychosocial needs of the patients, and the role of the nurse in providing emotional support. By presenting such, the area of concern was addressed in a holistic manner. The article also presented a case study with nursing interventions, which allows the reader to grasp the impact of cancer and interventions related to patients’ psychosocial needs. The evaluation of failure to recognize and address the psychosocial needs of cancer survivors was descriptive and understandable, and I agree passionately with the need to standardize such into patient care plans. I also agree with the need for continual updating of distress-management screening tools to better evaluate the affected population. The author also addressed

the implementation of cancer survivorship care plans, which is very near and dear to my family’s current needs.

I am in my third semester toward my bachelor’s degree in nursing, and I have a desire to work in oncology. As a cancer survivor, oncology is a specific area of interest. I was very pleased to read that the psychosocial needs of cancer survivors are becoming a standard of care. This sheds light on a subject in need of addressing. Being a student nurse, I appreciate any advice or recommendations presented by a more experienced professional, and the suggestions may prove to be beneficial in my future practice. More importantly, this topic also addresses a road map for meeting family psychosocial needs. It also is endearing to be made aware of the impact of addressing cancer survivorship psychosocial needs and related outcomes.

I found this article very informative, factual, and beneficial to nursing practice and my family’s situation. As a cancer survivor, this article addressed my continuing needs of psychosocial support. As a future nurse, my goal is to care for my patients in the most effective and compassionate manner possible. Addressing the psychosocial needs of cancer survivors focuses on holistic and effective aspects of nursing care. Thank you very much for sharing possible methods and solutions related to cancer survivorship psychosocial needs and allowing me the opportunity to respond to the article presented.

*Geneva Maher
Student Nurse
Saint Anthony College of Nursing
Rockford, IL*

References

Hart, J. (2007). Addressing the psychosocial needs of cancer survivors. *Alternative*

and Complementary Therapies, 13(4), 183-186.

Kaplan, M. (2008). Cancer survivorship: Meeting psychosocial needs. *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing, 12*(6), 989-992.

Nurses Should Help Survivors Transition to Life After Cancer

As I was reading the article, “Cancer Survivorship: Meeting Psychosocial Needs” (Kaplan, 2008), it occurred to me that no one really thinks or talks about what happens after surviving cancer. Our U.S. society is so focused on curing cancer, and the ones lost to cancer, that we sometimes forget what the survivors endure post-therapy. I think it is important for nurses to recognize these issues and act appropriately in order to sustain their patients’ quality of life. These survivors often get used to the life of cancer and treatment and are unsure how to live without them. Nurses, in conjunction with valuable resources, are able to teach these survivors how to move past living with cancer to a life free of cancer. Rancour (2008) provided great advice on exactly how to help survivors transition back to cancer-free lives. She discussed using the illness as a spiritual journey and the steps that need to be taken in order to complete the journey successfully. The article also provides evidence about the lengthy time to become fully recovered, another aspect we sometimes forget about. She also provided other great ideas and a case study to further enhance the idea of the difficult transition to survivorship.

I think that this article demonstrates the survival phases for the patient and

Digital Object Identifier: 10.1188/09.CJON.259-262