

The Lives We Touch

We know the work we do is important to our patients and their families, but we may not always get to see or hear about its impact on them. Sometimes we get thanks by way of candy, coffee, or other well-meaning gestures. However, there may be other ways to answer when they ask, “What can we do to say thank you?” We did get a glimpse of another way to answer at the 2008 Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) 33rd Annual Congress when two patients spoke about the incredible care they received from their oncology nurses.

Linda Rodgers Emory described her experiences at the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC) Recognition Breakfast for Oncology Certified Nurses when she received the first Pearl Moore Certification Champion Award. Emory is a survivor of two breast cancers, multiple myeloma, and an autologous stem cell transplantation. She told the audience of oncology nurses that “there isn’t enough time to tell you how much I appreciated your skills, clinical management of my life, and how touched I was by your sensitivity to my needs, and your

encouragement and ability to comfort whenever you could.” She wanted to show her gratitude for the excellent nursing care she received and find a way to give something back. Marcelle Kaplan, RN, MS, AOCN®, suggested that she create a fund to help nurses at the Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York, NY, prepare for and take oncology certification examinations. So, Emory did just that for the oncology nurses at the medical center.

Another survivor, Barry Baldwin, spoke at the Mara Mogensen Flaherty Memorial Lectureship about his nurse, Tina Scherer, RN, MSN, OCN®. As the cancer care coordinator at the Helen Graham Cancer Center in Newark, DE, Scherer has been involved in Baldwin’s osteosarcoma care since 2006. He spoke of Scherer’s competence, sense of concern, and caring that put him and his family at ease during his illness. Scherer has been the recipient of an ONS Foundation master’s scholarship and also benefited

from a scholarship to attend a past ONS Institutes of Learning.

Those stories are just a glimpse into the impact that more than 37,000 ONS members and many more oncology nurses have had on the lives of patients with cancer and their families while living



How do you respond when a grateful patient or family member asks, “What can I do to say thank you?”

with the disease and its treatment. Our impact is enormous! Many grateful individuals and families are appreciative and respectful of our profession.

How will you answer when patients or family members ask what they can do for oncology nursing? Hospitals have figured it out—so have physicians. Buildings and laboratories are named, research funds are established. But most nurses have not figured out how to answer. Luckily for the nurses at the Weill Cornell Medical Center, Kaplan knew how to answer.

The ONS Foundation and ONCC provide a number of giving opportunities that can help oncology nurses in many different ways. Tell your patients and families they can make a lasting gift through the ONS Foundation and/or ONCC. Or identify needs of oncology nurses within your own institution. What would be on your wish list? Those gifts will create a lasting mark on the lives of the nurses and the people living with cancer for whom they care.

2009 *CJON* Call for Articles

The mission of the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing (CJON)* is twofold: to provide practical information necessary to care for patients and their families across the cancer continuum and to develop publication skills in oncology nurses. In addition to reviewing and publishing unsolicited manuscripts, the *CJON* Editorial Board will also publish an annual call for articles to address current gaps in the literature to fulfill our mission. The *CJON* Editorial Board has identified topics of interest for our readership that include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Ethical issues
- Genetics
- Informatics
- Prevention/early detection
- Radiation therapy
- Comorbid conditions
- Geriatrics
- Interventional radiology
- Professional Issues
- Tumor biomarkers/genomics

Potential authors are encouraged to review the instructions for authors found at www.cjon.org. Query letters can be sent to CJONEditor@ons.org.