

Connecting: Resources for Persons with Lung Cancer and Their Families (Video Transcript)

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<http://www.uchospitals.edu/specialties/cancer/lung/video/index.html>

Featuring:

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Social Worker, Cancer Resource Center

My name is Trish Parker and I'm a social worker here in the Cancer Resource Center. I'll be talking about connecting, so what connecting means and this presentation is helping to connect patients and their families to resources that can help support them, during their treatment and after their treatment.

The resources that I'm going to focus on, I'm going to start by talking about support, then talk about getting accurate and reliable information, financial assistance that's available to patients, as well as patient programs that are offered here at the University of Chicago Hospitals, supportive counseling and other support programs, transportation assistance and then I'll speak a little bit about the Cancer Resource Center.

First in terms of talking about support, as Sarah and Ramona talked about the importance of support and finding people who are supportive to you. I started by just thinking about what a patient's existing supports might be so some of these, maybe a significant other, a family member, community member, maybe someone from your church or spiritual community, maybe it's a coworker, someone you're in a book club with or another group like that. Just thinking about existing supports that you've used in past experiences where you've needed some extra support. Then also think beyond this list, think about other options that may be available, other people who may be able to provide support to you.

Next, in terms of asking for support, a lot of people may not have trouble thinking of people who could help them but may not feel as comfortable asking for that support. In terms of doing that, I think it's important to consider first the areas in which you need support. After you've identified people that may be able to support you, think about what their assets are, think about what they may be able to help with. Maybe you have an important appointment coming up and you don't want to bring your kids to the appointment, but your sister could maybe pick them up from school and spend a couple hours with them while you're at your appointment.

Think about how each person on your list of supports may be able to help you, when you feel like you need that extra support. It might not be asking someone to drive you everyday for your radiation appointment, it may just be asking a friend, "Can you come with me? Can you give me a

ride on Monday for my appointments?" You can start small and ask people for little things to help you feel more supported and if you have a good idea in mind of what you might need help with, that's a good place to start.

Then after you ask for support, or even if you don't ask for support and people offer to help you, it's important to accept their support. You're not dependent upon others and you're not becoming dependent upon others, but you're really accepting their support and help. Instead of saying no thank you when someone offers you support, I suggest just saying thank you and accepting their support.

Others have asked you in the past for support when they have been in a situation, so now it's your turn to be able to ask for that support and accept that support from those people.

Next, I wanted to speak about information. There is a lot of information available for patients and family members or friends who are dealing with a diagnosis of cancer. These are some of the sources that we listed, in terms of getting reliable information: the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute, Cancer Care, the American Lung Association, the Lung Cancer Alliance. Those are some of the sources of information that can be especially helpful for patients and their families dealing with a diagnosis of lung cancer.

Next, in term of financial assistance, I think Ramona had mentioned that you know am I going to have to stop working? Questions that you might have in terms of how are you going to manage your finances if you're not able to continue working full time? Some of the assistance that we can help with are applying for grants. There are numerous grants available through different organizations that can help with copayments, can help with prescriptions, utility companies are also willing to set up payment plans to make sure that if you're not able to pay the full bill that you still have your electricity and gas on, especially during the winter season so helping to work on setting up a payment plan with utility companies. Maybe you want help applying for social security benefits or Medicare or Medicaid Insurance.

Another program offered here for patients and their family members is discounted lodging, so if you're coming from out of town for treatment and need a place to stay before or after your treatment, we can help you find different lodging available in this area.

Patient programs offered at University of Chicago, so connecting to some other support programs. The first program listed is the support for recovery program, and that's a program through your American Cancer Society, which can match you with a patient who has maybe had a similar diagnosis or a similar treatment and you can speak with them over the phone and share a little bit about your experiences, as well as hear a little bit about their experiences.

There's a massage therapist down in radiation so when patients maybe need a little bit more relaxation help, you know with the day in and day out of radiation therapy, there's a massage therapist available that provides massage therapy for free for the patients. There's a networking group that will be starting next month specifically for lung cancer patients to be able to share information and share their experiences with other patients.

There's a look good/feel better program, which is offered here as well and that's through the American Cancer Society where a cosmetologist comes in and works with women patients kind of

teaching a makeup class and talking about skin care. Facing the mirror is offered throughout the week. Lori Ovitz runs that program and she talks with all patients about skin care, changes with their hair, other things like that, so she's available here as well to work with the patients.

Supportive counseling, I also wanted to talk about. There's supportive counseling available here with a licensed social worker. There's also individual and group programs available in the community and some of the programs listed are through the Wellness Alliance. There are four locations and then Gilda's Club, which is in Chicago. They provide support groups, networking groups, individual work with patients and other things to do to help patients relax and learn more about their treatment options.

In relation to talking about the supportive counseling, I think it's important to understand the value of support. Research has shown that patients who feel more supported and have been able to use services such as supportive counseling can be more active in their treatment. The same research shows us that patients who are more active in their treatment have better outcomes.

The transportation assistance, this kind of comes down to a concrete need, you know getting here for your appointments, you might be here two or three days a week, you might be here five days a week. Some of the programs are grants that are available to help maybe with gas and parking for your appointments, or cancer care also offers another transportation grant for patients living in Pace or CTA areas, there's para-transit available, which is a door to door service in a medical van that would be essentially the same cost as riding the CTA. Also first transit is available, that's a door to door medical van service as well that's available for free for patients with the Medicaid card.

I also wanted to talk specifically about the Cancer Resource Center, where I work out of. I work with all patients, inpatient and outpatient, but I work out of the Cancer Resource Center, with a resource coordinator who is up here tonight as well, her name is Mary Herbert. We're here as part of a collaboration between the University of Chicago Hospitals, the Cancer Research Center here at the university and the American Cancer Society, so some of the connect into services that I spoke about, you can come and meet with us and we can help you figure out which services would be helpful to connect with and get you started in that process. We're on the first floor of this building, near where the billing office is, near where that Argo Teas and we're here Monday through Friday from 9:00 until 5:00. We have an 800 number listed there if anyone has any questions and they're not here for their appointment.

What we provide in the Cancer Resource Center, we provide information about diagnosis, treatment, support and prevention, calendars of upcoming events, we have a video and book library, we have relaxation audio recordings, similar to the one that Ramona spoke about that are at everyone's place. We also have wigs for patients with treatment related hair loss, internet and printing, we can help with the resources that I've been speaking about and all these services are offered here free for patients at the University of Chicago Hospitals, as well as patients who live in the community.

The last thing I wanted to address is just for patients. We are having our first lung cancer networking group. It will be offered starting Wednesday, December 6, at 12:00, its going to be in the conference room in 1D, which if anybody has had radiation, its back in the radiation department. We're going to have free lunch provided for patients to just have an opportunity to talk about their

experiences and share information with one another.

That's it so, if anyone has any questions, Ramona, Sarah and I will be here at the resource table, so if you guys have any questions, feel free to come speak with any of us. Thank you.

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To learn about more lung cancer care at the University of Chicago Medical Center, visit:
<http://www.uchospitals.edu/specialties/cancer/lung/index.html>

To request an appointment with a University of Chicago Medical Center physician, visit our Web site at www.uchospitals.edu or call toll-free, 1-888-UCH-0200.

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