

ASPIRE

THE HOSPITAL OF CENTRAL CONNECTICUT'S BREAST HEALTH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2010

One patient's story: From fear to strength

Ann Quinn's initial fear of breast cancer has surrendered to strength — the kind that comes from knowledge, support, faith, family and even laughter — lots of it.

She recalls one breast cancer support group meeting at The Hospital of Central Connecticut (HCC) where fellow patients were laughing so hard that one went to wipe her eyes, only to remove the last of her remaining eyelashes, a fallout from chemotherapy. And yet, Quinn says, the patient kept on laughing.

Sharing other patients' experiences, support from HCC's breast cancer program, her family and faith are what Quinn, 48, attributes to helping her through treatment. Now in recovery and feeling "excellent," she still goes to the monthly support group meetings and has no intention of stopping.

Her story began last September with diagnosis of Stage 0 ductal carcinoma in situ breast cancer, one of the most common types of breast cancer. The diagnosis followed two mammograms at HCC's Diagnostic Breast Center, a stereotactic biopsy and MRI.

"When someone tells you you have breast cancer, you don't know where to turn," recalls

Quinn, whose cancer was confined to the right breast. But within days, HCC breast Nurse Navigator Donna Boehm R.N., M.S.N., M.P.H., called Quinn, of New Britain, to introduce the hospital's breast care program. Boehm met with Quinn at HCC to answer questions and discuss her treatment plan, developed in part through a conference with

a variety of physician specialists.

"It was good to talk to a breast navigator that helped me with any of my concerns," Quinn says.

Boehm explained Quinn's treatment plan step by step. It started with an Oct. 20 outpatient lumpectomy at HCC by general surgeon Akella Sarma, M.D., to remove cancerous and outlying cells; and was followed by nearly eight weeks of radiation therapy at the American Savings Foundation Radiation Oncology Treatment Center at the New Britain General campus. Quinn remembers staff "taking such good care of me" during those visits, in which she also often saw Boehm. Quinn is now on a daily regimen of tamoxifen, for five years, to help prevent any new breast cancer from developing.

She also attended a six-week survivorship program for women in recovery that started in February. An avid exerciser, Quinn especially liked the sessions on exercising for health, and complementary and alternative medicine. This past spring, she felt well enough to exercise and is now

walking one to two miles daily, and swimming.

She's thankful for the friendships developed from the survivorship program and support group. "We call each other to make sure everyone is OK," says Quinn. "You meet them under the worst circumstances of their lives but it turns out to be a happy thing."

"I'm not scared anymore," she says. "I have people to talk to."



ANN QUINN ENJOYS A WALK
IN WALNUT HILL PARK.

"It was good to talk to a breast navigator that helped me with any of my concerns."

Breast cancer program emphasizes expert care, support



DONNA BOEHM, R.N., M.S.N., M.P.H.,
TALKS WITH STELLA LAURIE.

Getting a breast cancer diagnosis can make it hard to focus on the future and the steps needed to treat the disease. The Hospital of Central Connecticut's breast cancer program offers a streamlined, fast-tracked patient care process that blends both clinical expertise and patient support.

Since its start in early 2009, more than 200 patients have benefitted from the program anchored by breast Nurse Navigator Donna Boehm, R.N., M.S.N., M.P.H., as well as weekly breast conferences and patient education.

Early on, Boehm teaches patients and their loved ones about the diagnosis. She helps patients make informed decisions about treatment, which she helps to coordinate. She also advocates for patients during treatment, providing emotional support from diagnosis through recovery.

Boehm says about 60 percent of women diagnosed with breast cancer at HCC opt for navigation assistance. "The patients who have accessed the navigation services have found value in the patient education I provide, in knowing someone is available to answer their questions."

The breast cancer program's services begin once a patient's mammogram indicates biopsy need. The radiologist will share findings and discuss biopsy options with the patient immediately following the mammogram, and contact the referring physician. Next steps are:

Schedule an appointment with a surgeon. Participating surgeons agree to see a patient within 24-48 business hours of when the patient receives mammogram results. The patient will see a surgeon of her choice; if she has no preference, the primary care physician selects the surgeon. Radiology schedules the appointment.

Support the patient through biopsy. Depending on mammogram findings, the patient will have a stereotactic, ultrasound-guided or surgical biopsy. Patient counseling is available before and after the biopsy.

Present breast cancer case at multidisciplinary breast conference. Representatives from Surgery, Radiology, Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology and Pathology develop treatment plans upon reviewing patient's history, physical findings, X-rays and pathology. The recommendation is for the surgeon and patient to review when deciding on treatment.

"The patients that I talk to really value the fact that we review their case at the breast conference and that we get multiple physician opinions," says Boehm.

For more program information, contact Boehm at 860-224-5900, X6307.

HCC awarded \$60,000 in grants for cancer education, research

The Hospital of Central Connecticut (HCC) has been awarded two grants totaling \$60,000 from the Connecticut Breast Health Initiative, Inc. (CT BHI, Inc.) toward breast cancer education and research.

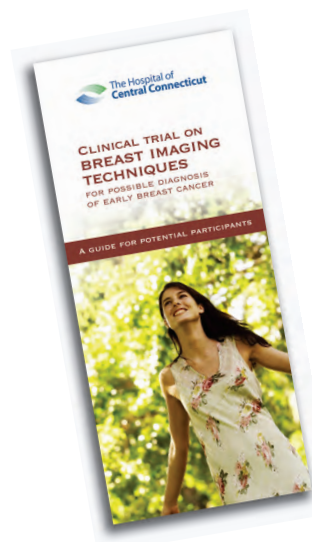
A \$20,000 grant will support the hospital's breast cancer program educational initiatives. These include survivorship workshops, manuals for patients with breast cancer, and community education about breast health and breast cancer.

The \$40,000 research grant will be used for a study to compare the findings of breast specific gamma imaging (BSGI), MRI and ultrasound used in the evaluation of high-risk patients with dense breasts. HCC radiologist Jean Weigert, M.D., will be the principal investigator. Weigert conducted a previous award-winning study that showed measurable value of a BSGI test over ultrasound in detecting breast cancer as a follow-up to a mammogram.

These grants follow a \$15,000 education grant in 2009 from CT BHI, Inc. toward patient education. The new grants' project titles are "The Breast Health Navigation Program" and "Mammography Comparison using BSGI, Whole Breast USG (ultrasonography), and Breast MRI in High-Risk Patients."

Last year, HCC launched its breast cancer program, which includes a breast nurse navigator and weekly breast conference meetings. HCC Nurse Navigator Donna Boehm, R.N., M.S.N., M.P.H., guides patients through the healthcare system from diagnosis through treatment. For a brochure about the research study or a copy of the hospital's new breast cancer program newsletter for patients, please contact Boehm at 860-224-5900, X6307.

CT BHI, Inc. has assumed a leading role in the fight against breast cancer in Connecticut since 2003, having awarded 1.5 million dollars in grants.



Life after Treatment workshop series begins Sept. 14

The Hospital of Central Connecticut offers a free, six-week workshop, Cancer Transitions Life after Treatment, for women who have completed active cancer treatment within the past two years and are transitioning into survivorship. Sessions, listed below, are 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesdays September through November at the New Britain General campus, 100 Grand St., and include a light dinner. Physicians and staff with HCC's breast program lead sessions. To register or for more information about the program, funded by The Connecticut Breast Health Initiative, please contact Donna Boehm at 860-224-5900 X6307 or via dboehm@thocc.org.

Sept. 14: You are a Survivor Now What?

Basic concepts of survivorship

Nurse Navigator Donna Boehm

Specific issues and topics during transition from treatment to wellness.

Survivor panel

Sept. 28: Emotional Health and Well-being: From Patient to Survivor

Transitioning back into life after treatment, including work, sexuality, stress management.

Social worker Diane DeFronzo

Oct. 12: Choosing Life and Movement – Exercising for Health

Benefits of exercise and movement on recovery and long-term survival; also, lymphedema prevention.

Occupational therapist Ruth Satterberg & physical therapist Ruth Harwood

Oct. 26: Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Information for Survivors

Including complementary and alternative medicine practices into a wellness program.

Acupuncturist and complementary therapy practitioner Susan Bisbee-White

Nov. 9: Nutrition: The Benefits of Healthy Eating

The benefits of good nutrition and weight management for the breast cancer survivor.

Registered dietitian Kari King

Nov. 23: Medical Management after Breast Cancer

Follow-up care standards, other medical concerns related to breast cancer treatment, survivorship.

Medical oncologist Barbara Fallon, M.D.

A fresh message about fruits and vegetables

BY KARI KING, MHSE, RD

A healthy diet is important and research suggests it may even help prevent a secondary tumor or cancer recurrence. Some foods with naturally occurring substances that may help ward off cancer are fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans.

The World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute of Cancer Research 2007 Report *Food, Nutrition, Physical Activity, and the Prevention of Cancer: a Global Perspective* suggests diet can help toward prevention of a secondary tumor or return of cancer.

To help bring home the value of fruits and vegetables toward good health, the federal government has a new campaign: Fruits & Veggies—More Matters® at www.fruitsandveggiemorematters.org. The campaign's message is to eat more fruits and vegetables — think two to six and a half cups every day — whether at school, work or home for better health.

This revamped and savvy website is loaded with helpful resources:

- For ideas on how to get your children excited about fruits and vegetables, visit “Getting Kids Involved.”
- To sneak more vegetables into your casseroles, check out “Meal Planning.”

Getting started

To get into the habit of eating more fruits and vegetables consider adding fruit to your breakfast cereal, pancakes, or toast. Add lettuce and tomato to your sandwich. Top yogurt with sliced apples or berries. Have fresh fruit as a mid-morning snack. Canned, dried, and frozen fruits and vegetables are also good options.

The possibilities of adding produce to your diet are endless. Remember, more is better!

Registered dietitian Kari King works in Health Promotion & Bariatrics at The Hospital of Central Connecticut



Upcoming support group meetings

The Hospital of Central Connecticut offers support groups for people with breast cancer and those living with cancer. The monthly meetings are 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the American Savings Foundation Radiation Oncology Treatment Center, 5 Highland St., New Britain General campus. Free parking available in front of the building. For more information, please call 860-224-5900 x6307.

Breast Cancer Support Group meetings: Aug. 4, Sept. 1, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 1

Living with Cancer Support Group meetings: Aug. 18, Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17, Dec. 15



Mark your calendar for this free event!

An Evening with Dr. Susan Love

Author, *Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book* & *Dr. Susan Love's Menopause and Hormone Book*

6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 18
Aqua Turf, 556 Mulberry Street, Plantsville

RSVP by Monday, Oct. 11
to 860-224-5900 X6321

The Hospital of Central Connecticut Comprehensive Breast Services locations

Breast Program Administration
100 Grand St., New Britain, CT 06052
860-224-5900 Ext. 6321

Nurse Navigator Donna Boehm
100 Grand St., New Britain, CT 06052
860-224-5900 Ext. 6307

George Bray Cancer Center
100 Grand St., New Britain, CT 06052
860-224-5410

Radiation Therapy
5 Highland St., New Britain, CT 06052
860-224-5520

Imaging Centers

Newington Diagnostic Center
66 Cedar St., Newington, CT
860-665-7733

The Diagnostic Breast Center
40 Hart St. (Bldg C), New Britain, CT 06052
860-827-0525

New Britain General Campus Radiology
100 Grand St., New Britain, CT 06052
860-224-5556, 860-224-5556 (MRI)

The Women's Center
55 Meriden Ave., Southington, CT
860-276-5299

Bradley Memorial Campus Radiology
55 Meriden Ave., Southington, CT
860-276-5299

Hospital of Central Connecticut breast surgeons

Terrence Donahue, M.D., 860-826-5288
James Flaherty, M.D., 860-827-1981
Jennifer McCallister, M.D., 860-621-3183
Robert Napoletano, M.D., 860-826-4457
Michael Posner, M.D., 860-826-4457
Patrick Rocco, M.D., 860-829-5225
Akella Sarma, M.D., 860-225-9431
Rekhinder Singh, M.D., 860-224-5513

Medical oncologists

Peter Byeff, M.D., 860-224-4408, 860-621-9316
Brian Byrne, M.D., 860-621-9316, 860-224-4408
Barbara Fallon, M.D., 860-224-6254
William Pogue, M.D., 860-224-5410
Kenneth Smith, M.D., 860-621-9316, 860-224-4408

Radiation Oncologists

Neal Goldberg, M.D., 860-224-5520
Anwar Khan, M.D., 860-224-5520

An overview of mammogram and other tests

MAMMOGRAM

The two kinds of mammogram are a screening mammogram, an X-ray to detect breast changes in women with no breast cancer signs or symptoms, and a diagnostic mammogram, which usually follows an initial screening mammogram showing some irregularities. The Hospital of Central Connecticut's mammography X-ray units provide digital exams, which offer advanced viewing with zoom technology to better detect abnormalities. The units also have computer-aided detection (CAD), which helps target areas of concern.

Additional tests

Additional testing may be needed if mammogram results show areas that need further examination. Tests available at HCC are:

ULTRASOUND

Uses sound waves to obtain an image of organs and tissues. It may be used to diagnose various breast diseases, including breast cancer, cysts, and non-cancerous tumors (fibroadenomas).

MRI BREAST STUDY

This non-invasive technique produces cross-sectional images of the breast from various angles and does not involve radiation.

BREAST-SPECIFIC GAMMA IMAGING (BSGI)

A non-invasive test similar to a mammogram but that uses less compression. Before imaging, patients receive an intravenous radiotracer dye. This test, available at the Bradley Memorial campus (Women's Center of Southington), may be done in place of an ultrasound.

Biopsies

- **Ultrasound-guided breast core and aspiration biopsies:** The breast core biopsy uses a hollow needle that is inserted into the targeted area to remove tissue samples. With aspiration, a thin needle is used to remove fluid. Both procedures use ultrasound to produce pictures of the breast and help guide needle placement.
- **Surgical biopsy:** A surgical procedure that removes a larger tissue sample or whole tumor.
- **Stereotactic biopsy:** A computer-guided X-ray is used to locate tissue and guide the needle for tissue removal.

