Greetings. I am writing this shortly after having attended the Oncology Nursing Society Institutes of Learning in my hometown of Pittsburgh, PA. This served as a reminder how no matter what capacity one serves in a cancer-related profession - nurse, librarian, or otherwise - at some level it is ultimately to meet the needs of the patient/survivor.

To that end, our Section continues to engage in activities, support programs, and identify resources that focus on the patient/survivor.

This issue includes the feature article "Librarian as Patient" by Rosanne Kalick, as well as announcements of a new cancer patient social networking site and several recommended resources in the areas of survivorship and rehabilitation.

At the upcoming MLA Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, thanks to Program Chair Gail Hendler our Section is partnering with the Consumer and Patient Health Information Section for an invited speaker session and contributed papers exploring the theme "Patient as Expert: Revolutionary Changes in Medical Decision-Making."

There is a "Consumer & Patient Resources" collection of links within the Cancer Librarians Recommended Web Sites, and our Section Web site includes a "Partial List of Patient Cancer Libraries in the United States and Canada".

Within the past few months our Cancer-lib listserv has seen inquiries regarding cancer resources for consumers, and I have addressed the same topic in my personal dealings with two new members to our Section, as they have consumer collection responsibilities and I recently began serving as library advisor/donor to Gilda's Club Western Pennsylvania, a social support meeting place for men, women and children living with cancer.

Our section is fortunate to have several very active members, but we also need the rest of you and your ideas, suggestions, and projects to keep our section vibrant and visible to the rest of MLA. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding our section.

Have a safe and happy holiday season,

Mark Vrabel
Chair
Six years ago, a routine mammography showed malignancies in both breasts; a double mastectomy was required. One friend said, “At least you’ll be symmetrical,” a remark that might have been funny a year after my diagnosis, but certainly not within two hours of the procedure. When it comes to cancer, many of us do not know what to say or what to do.

Were my experiences unusual? Were there books that dealt with how to communicate with someone who has cancer? I checked library databases using the terms cancer etiquette, and then medical etiquette. I found nothing. Using Google I found two articles that looked promising. I read and read and read about cancer. I spoke to patients, clergy, nurses, and doctors about their experiences.

The cliché “Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me” is simply not true. (The taunt was first listed in “Folk Phrases of Four Counties by G.F. Northall in 1894.) When it comes to cancer, what we say and do counts. What we say or do can heal or hurt. I found little information that helped me to deal with the shock, fear, anger, and emotional pain of two cancer diagnoses.

There are ways to find the right words.

For example, instead of “I’m here for you,” I suggest something more concrete and practical, such as “I’ll bring dinner over every Tuesday. Tell me what your favorites are.”

I caution about saying, “You’ll be fine.” Of course you want your friend or loved one to be fine, but someone with cancer is scared, angry, fearful of treatment, etc. Saying, “I hope you will be fine” connotes caring, but does not minimize the emotional stress the patient has.
“You look so good” is a phrase many patients cringe at. I can’t speak for all patients, but during treatment I had lost every bit of hair; my face was swollen from steroids; I was pale…..I did not look good. Hearing you say, “You look better today,” or “It’s good to see you smile,” may be more realistic and, therefore, more reassuring to me.

Based on my own experience I would suggest three titles that do address the issue of dealing with the whole patient, and not just the tumor.

Any book by Dr. Jerome Groopman, professor and oncologist at Harvard Medical School. His latest is, The Anatomy of Hope. Dr. Groopman never forgets that he is dealing with a person, not just a disease. Dr. Rachel Naomi’s My Grandfather’s Blessings is a book of stories of people coping with illness. She specializes in emotional aspects of cancer. Dr. Jimmie Holland is a psychiatrist at Sloan Kettering Memorial Hospital. The Human Side of Cancer should be in every patient and medical library.

I’ve learned a lot during my years in the cancer life. My way of giving back was to write, Cancer Etiquette: What to Say, What to Do When Someone You Know or Love Has Cancer. No rules, just suggestions.

There are now more than 10 million cancer survivors. For many of us cancer is a chronic rather than a fatal disease. We have long term issues to consider, ranging from health insurance coverage to the effects of long term treatment. We need to know when to worry about symptoms and when not to. We need to address the long term effects of treatment. For example, I have permanent neuropathy from the extensive chemotherapy I’ve had.

What resources meet these needs of the long term survivors?

All of you have been, or will be touched by cancer. Three out of every four families will have at least one family member diagnosed with cancer. As librarians, you have the power to help us by finding the right words, the right resources.

Resources Recommended by Rosanne:


Think of life as a terminal illness, because, if you do, you will live it with joy and passion, as it ought to be lived.

~ Anna Quindlen
A new website called Caring Voices www.caringvoices.ca offers Canadian women with breast cancer on-line access to medical experts, peers, and a resource library. Regardless of their geographical location, visitors can log on to the site and join professionally facilitated online discussion groups, be matched up with peer survivors who share similar interests and life situation, and obtain medical information prepared by experts in patient education.

Princess Margaret Hospital’s award-winning Patient Education Program and Breast Cancer Survivorship Program staff manage the website. They produced the website’s information resources and are moderating the discussion groups. PMH created the website in collaboration with Klick Communications, while cancer survivors provided input into its development and testing.

“I wish this site existed when I was first diagnosed with breast cancer,” says Karen Portelli, breast cancer survivor and PMH peer support volunteer. “It’s great to find reliable information and resources in one easily accessible place and to know you can connect with someone in the middle of the night without leaving your home.”

“This online initiative expands the support available for patients at the hospital’s Survivorship Program,” says Dr. Pam Catton, Director of Education and Medical Director, Breast Cancer Survivorship Program at PMH. “With the new website, more people can benefit from the program no matter where they live in the country. We’re delighted to have worked with Klick Communications, who has the talent and expertise for developing appealing and easy-to-use on-line tools.”

“Caring Voices provides cancer survivors, their families and friends access to a wealth of information relevant to their situation and a safe environment to participate in online discussions,” says David Wiljer, PMH’s Director of Knowledge Management and Innovation.

Development of the website is supported by The Quilt, The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation, and Klick Communications all of Toronto, Ontario.

Caring Voices is part of the integrated support initiatives of The Weekend to End Breast Cancer Survivorship Program, which started in 2005 and focuses on three goals: empowerment through education, enhancing the clinical experience, and enabling community connections. For more information, visit www.survivorship.ca.

Klick Communications builds business solutions using proven and practical technologies. The company takes an innovative and creative approach in order to deliver remarkable results on-time and on-budget. With offices in Toronto and Montreal, Klick has established long-term relationships with leading healthcare companies. For more information visit, www.klickit.com.

Princess Margaret Hospital and its research arm, Ontario Cancer Institute, have achieved an international reputation as global leaders in the fight against cancer. Princess Margaret Hospital is a member of the University Health Network, which also includes Toronto General Hospital and Toronto Western Hospital. All three are teaching hospitals affiliated with the University of Toronto.

By Jennifer Kohm, Public Relations
& Michelle Arbuckle, Manager Patient Education
Princess Margaret Hospital
Section programmers from the Cancer Librarians Section and the Consumer and Patient Health Information Section (CaPHIS) are working together to finalize plans for MLA '07, *Information Revolution: Change is in the Air*, to be held in Philadelphia, PA., May 18 - 23, 2007.

The Cancer Librarians Section primary program, "Patient As Expert: Revolutionary Changes in Medical Decision-Making." The program will look at the journey of cancer patients along the disease continuum and how information needs are met and unmet while going from initial diagnosis and crisis to treatment of chronic disease. Our invited speaker will be Gale Hannigan who will share her very personal journey as a cancer survivor/information consumer and librarian. The program will also present two - three contributed papers from colleagues. Stay tuned for announcements for the program’s time and location on the Cancer Librarians discussion list.

Three Easy Steps to Getting Your Good Idea Published with MLA Publishing!

If you have an idea for a book that will advance the profession, why wait! Go to “Proposals Demystified” and for a list of current titles.

Talk with your local MLA Books Panel member:
Gail Hendler, Lenox Hill Hospital tel., 212-434-2077; ghendler@lenoxhill.net

Current topics in need of proposals (others welcome):
- alternative careers for library degrees
- how to develop online tutorials
- library management 101
- library Website usability studies
- remodeling and building for learning
- research methods for beginners
- technology

For more information on MLA Publishing, contact
Lynanne Feilen Tel. 312.419.9094 x23
mlacom1@mlahq.org

Earn AHIP Points!
Volunteer Opportunity for Cancer Section Librarians.

The MLA Cancer Librarians Task Force charged with developing a "Recommended Web Sites" web page is seeking volunteer editors to manage content areas.

The purpose of the project is to provide medical librarians with a resource to use in their daily practice and teaching. Secondly, it is our contribution to the MLA so that the headquarters staff can refer oncology professionals to a list of quality health web sites. Our goal is to have a limited number of resources that meet the quality criteria for currency, credibility, content, audience, etc., as described on our website.

The topical headings list has not been finalized. Interested Cancer Section members can take responsibility for an existing topic or develop new subject lists.

View the draft here.

Contact Frank Davis at the following email or phone if you like to volunteer or wish to learn more about the project.

Tel. 859-323-3983
Fax: 859-323-1040
fldavi2@email.uky.edu
**DONALD A. B. LINDBERG FELLOWSHIP—DUE NOVEMBER 15, 2006**
MLA is now accepting applications for The Donald A. B. Lindberg Research Fellowship established by MLA to fund research aimed at expanding the research knowledge base of health sciences information management and enhancing the role of health sciences librarians and other information professionals in health care access and delivery, public health, consumer information, health professions education or biomedical research. The endowment will provide a $25,000 grant, awarded annually by MLA through a competitive grant process, to a qualified health sciences librarian, informatician, health professional, researcher, educator, or health administrator. An application and more information about the fellowship can be accessed here.

**MLA CONTINUING EDUCATION GRANT - APPLICATIONS DUE DECEMBER 1, 2006.**
Consider applying for an MLA CE Grant of $100-$500 to develop your knowledge of the theoretical, administrative, and/or technical aspects of librarianship. An applicant must hold a graduate degree in Library Science, be a practicing health sciences librarian with at least two years of experience and a citizen or permanent resident of the United States or Canada. Click here for an application.

**2008 MLA CUNNINGHAM MEMORIAL INTL FELLOWSHIP — DUE DECEMBER 1, 2006.**
The award is given annually to citizens or permanent residents from countries outside the United States or Canada who have both an undergraduate degree and a master's level library degree and are working or preparing to work in a health sciences library in their countries. The program provides a learning experience that may consist of a stay in the United States at one or more medical libraries. Based upon the upcoming 2007 pilot program, the format and duration of the 2008 program could vary from two weeks up to a period of three months. For a fact sheet and application click here.

**EBSCO /MLA ANNUAL MEETING GRANT- DUE DECEMBER 1, 2006.**
The EBSCO/MLA Annual Meeting Grant sponsored by EBSCO Information Services enables up to four medical librarians to attend the MLA Annual Meeting and pays up to $1,000 in travel and conference-related expenses. An application form and criteria can be found here. To be eligible, an applicant must be currently employed as a health sciences librarian and have between two and five years experience in a health sciences library. For more information, contact George Wahlert, Jury Chair, gwahlert@chpnet.org

**MLA DAVID A. KRONICK TRAVELING FELLOWSHIP—DUE DECEMBER 1, 2006**
This $2000 fellowship is given for studying a specific aspect of health information management by traveling to three or more medical libraries in the US or Canada. More information and an application can be accessed here. For additional information, contact Laura K. Cousineau, Jury Chair, 843-792-2368, cousinel@musc.edu

**RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECT GRANT—DUE DECEMBER 1, 2006**
The grant provides financial support for research, development, or demonstration projects that will help to promote excellence in the field of health sciences librarianship and information sciences. More information and application form can be found here. Please email Howard Silver, Jury Chair, at hsilver@mit.edu if you have questions.

**MLA SCHOLARSHIP – DUE DECEMBER 1, 2006.**
Applications are now being accepted for the MLA Scholarship 2007. This scholarship provides up to $5,000 to a student who shows excellence in scholarship and potential for accomplishment in health sciences librarianship. Further information and criteria are available here or email Anne Heimann, Jury Chair at anne.heimann@otsuka.com.

For more information on any of these grants please contact Lisa C. Fried, MLA’s Credentialing, Professional Recognition and Career Coordinator at mlapd2@mlahq.org.
Cancer Librarians Section Officers 2006/2007

**Chair**
Mark Vrabel, AHIP
mvrabel@ons.org
Oncology Nursing Society
125 Enterprise Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275

**Chair Elect/Program Chair**
Gail Y. Hendler, MLS, AHIP
ghendler@lenoxhill.net
Health Sciences Library
Lenox Hill Hospital
100 E. 77th Street
New York, NY 10021

**Past Chair**
JoAnne Sparks
sparksj@mskcc.org
Nathan Cummings Center
Memorial Sloan-Kettering
1275 York Avenue
New York, New York 10021

**Secretary**
Heidi Heilemann, AHIP
heilemann@stanford.edu
Stanford University Medical Center
Lane Medical Library
L-109, Route 3
Stanford, CA 94305-5123

**Section Council Rep.**
Margaret Vugrin, AHIP
Margaret.vugrin@ttuhsc.edu
Texas Tech Univ. HSC
Library of the Hlth. Sciences
3601 4th Street
Lubbock, TX 79430

**Treasurer**
Sue Felber
felbers@moffitt.usf.edu
Medical Library
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center
12902 Magnolia Drive
Tampa, FL 33612

**Newsletter Editor**
Michelle Arbuckle
Michelle.arbuckle@uhn.on.ca
Princess Margaret Hospital
Toronto, ON

**Web Editor**
Ann Marie Clark
aclark@fhcrc.org
Arnold Digital Library
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

**Membership Committee Chair**
Deborah Bonelli
St. Barnabas Hospital
Medical Library
4422 Third Avenue
Bronx, NY 10457

---

**Calling All Writers!**

Do you have anything of interest for the Spring 2007 issue?

Then tell me.

Because otherwise I’ll hunt you down.

And force you to write something.

You’ve been warned.

Please forward on your articles to
michelle.arbuckle@uhn.on.ca

Deadline: April 32, 2007