



## THE BENEFITS OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY & INTEGRATED CARE IN MANAGING BLADDER CANCER



With Dr. Jeanny B. Aragon-Ching, Dr. Sam Lolak and Lauren Broschak, LCSW



### Understanding Integrative Care in Bladder Cancer

**Lauren Broschak:** I'm going to be going over just a little bit about Life with Cancer, the program we have here at Inova and how we provide the multidisciplinary and integrative approach and then I'll go a little bit more broad from there. The purpose of our program is to enhance the quality of life to those who are affected by cancer and providing evidence-based education, support, wellness programs and integrative practices. We are a unique model. We are a program of the Inova Schar Cancer Institute. We're funded by the community through donations, planned gifts and fundraisers. We are available in multiple locations or our beautiful family center that you just saw, as well as, we have staff placed into four hospitals and our outpatient at Inova Schar Cancer Center. We offer both inpatient and outpatient supportive services.

Our services are offered throughout the cancer continuum, so starting at diagnosis, throughout treatment, into survivorship. Should there be any recurrences, we're there for that, as well as support for family members in bereavement. Our resources are free regardless of where you get treatments or the patients that get our services through Life with Cancer do not have to be patients of the Inova Schar Cancer Institute. Anybody that gets treatment in our general area, can come to our family center and get our support. It's available to patients, to survivors, to care caregivers, which includes friends and family. We also have

#### Life with Cancer: Unique Model

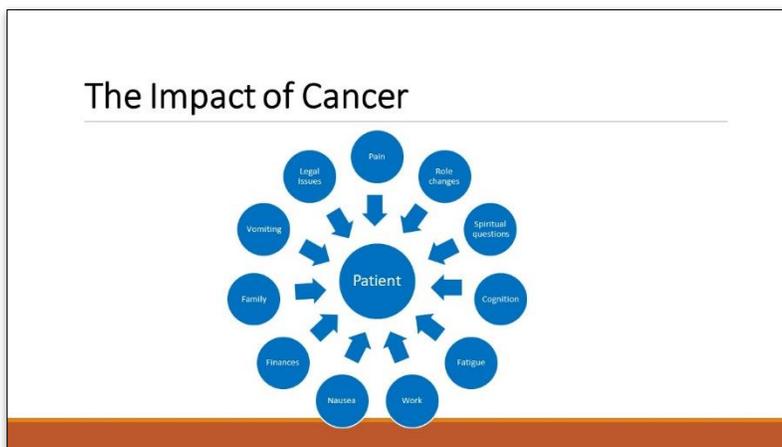
- Life with Cancer is
  - A program of the Inova Schar Cancer Institute
  - Funded by the community
  - Available at multiple locations
  - Offered throughout the cancer continuum
- Our resources and programs are FREE regardless of where you are treated
  - And available to patients, survivors, and caregivers
- Staffed by a large interdisciplinary team

programs for children and teens, both who are diagnosed, but also those who are children or teens of a parent, or a grandparent or a friend who is diagnosed. We're staffed by a large multitask or an interdisciplinary team that include oncology clinical therapists, which are social workers and counselors, oncology nurse navigators, oncology dietician. We have an oncology certified exercise therapist, oncologists, as well as our administrative team, acupuncturists, massage therapists and Reiki masters.

We are an evidence-based program. We're comprehensive and evidence-based is very important to us. We are including individual appointments with our navigators, with our therapists and our dieticians. We offer classes that are educational, movement-based, or stress reduction like Dr. Lolak spoke about. Educational is going to be more of those lectures and talks to talk about, for example, nutrition or side effect management, brain fog. Our movement can include yoga, Tai Chi, Zoomba, pickleball and anything in between. Then our stress reduction, art therapy, meditation, energy therapies like Reiki or healing, patch, writing, knitting, etc...

We have over 200 classes and programs a month and we're very proud to support our patients. Why are we offering all of these different programs, both in and outside of the treatment center? It's because cancer impacts every part of somebody's life and their family members. From physical symptoms to family relationships, the role that you play within your family can change, spiritual questions, emotional support needs, work, fatigue, memory and concentration or cognition, finances, legal, etc... We want to make sure that we're providing support on every level for our patients. The NIH, the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, talks about integrative care as it often brings conventional and complimentary approaches together. That's chemoradiation, immunotherapy, but also Reiki, acupuncture, talk therapy and many others together, both inside and outside of the treatment centers in coordination, to provide care to the whole person. These include mental, emotional, functional, spiritual, social and community aspects of care.

**Lauren Broschak:** It only comes to change, to provide care to the whole person. The goal of this is to improve quality of life and make sure that every aspect of a person's life is cared for. Looking at the treatment centers, what could you see, whether that's here at our center or in your own, for integrative or multidisciplinary care? Of course, there's the care provided by your oncology physician, including your medical oncologist, your radiation oncologist, your surgeons, your advanced practitioners, et cetera, both in and outpatient. There's many others, as you can see listed here, that you might also find within your treatment centers. Your oncology nurses can serve in many different roles. That really depends on their experience, their education, any specializations that they have and then the role that the center chooses for them to be in. Some of those can include, giving a physical exam, administrating chemotherapy or other medications, identifying patient needs, coordinating care with other members of the oncology team, education and performing research.



We have the palliative care team, which works really closely with the other oncology teams and their goal is to prevent or treat symptoms and side effects, both on cancer and of cancer treatments. They're especially helpful if we're having difficulty within the traditional oncology

team, to care for symptoms that you're having, that if we're not able to manage those, that palliative care team can step in and help specialize in that management.

## The Role of Integrative Care in Treatment Centers

- Oncology Nursing
- Palliative Care
- Nutrition
- Case Management
- Oncology Counseling
- Spiritual Care
- Rehabilitation Therapy
- Patient Navigation

The Oncology Team was originally published by Cancer.Net.

Our nutrition is typically offered by registered dietitians. The registered dietitians can provide education on eating well and general nutrition, as well as also recommendations to help those that are dealing with cancer cope with their dietary needs. In some cases, they can also provide medical nutrition therapy. We have case managers often seen as social

workers or nurses in this role. They provide a logistical support for our patients and families. some supportive resources that they can provide can include financial resources, housing assistance, insurance navigation, helping with disability paperwork, advanced directives, facilitating home help, so whether that's a home health organization and nurses, and certified nursing aides or a rehabilitation, so physical or occupational therapy or speech therapy at home, if you need any durable medical equipment like a wheelchair, a walker, a hospital bed, et cetera.

**Lauren Broschak:** They sometimes can help with transportation and then other logistical or practical needs. In the inpatient setting, they're often helping with discharge planning. We have oncology counseling, so it's offered typically by a social worker, a licensed counselor or an art therapist. This touches on much of what Dr Lolak was talking about, helping people cope with the cancer and the challenges that this can bring emotionally. They can also lead support groups or classes and help people find other supportive resources within the community or nationally. Spiritual care is often offered by a chaplain and they offer spiritual support or spiritual rituals for people with cancer and their families. They may also lead some support groups. Most hospitals will have a chaplain or a clergy on staff that work with people of all faiths.

Rehabilitation therapy is the physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists. They often help people with cancer return to their highest level of functioning. For example, they can help old people run exercises to regain strength after surgery. That's just one example. Then patient navigation. They help guide people from diagnosis, through survivorship. A patient navigator and can help a person find counseling, financial help or other support services. For example, if you don't have a case manager, but you do have a patient navigation, sometimes those can overlap. It can also help coordinate appointments and help communicate between yourself and your physicians or medical team. They're very valuable and helpful part of the team. They can be nurses, they could be social workers or volunteers. It really depends on your institution. Then the role of integrative care in the community. This is where we're seeing a lot of that supportive care, some of what Dr Lolak had touched on.

Peer support. This allows for connection with others who get it. I want to make a little note about groups. Oftentimes, I've heard from people feeling a little weary about going into groups, worried it will be really depressing or be like a pity party. Although people do sometimes bring their struggles to talk about in group, they also provide a wonderful community of support allowing space for sharing both difficult and positive news and just a space to support others. Many people have reported feeling a sense of community in their support groups, they enjoy laughter, as well as sometimes tears. Groups also provide multiple perspectives and they share common themes that many people experience regarding cancer, which can help reduce the isolation. The individual peer-to-peer support allows a space for you to talk with one other person who has been through a similar diagnosis, usually on the other side of that and treatment similar to you and so they can share their experience, which will help validate and normalize yours or give you ideas or questions to bring back your medical team.

## The Role of Integrative Care in the Community

- Peer support
  - Groups
  - Individual
- Educational classes
- Movement
- Stress reduction
- Mind-body
- Therapy & psychiatry

**Lauren Broschak:** Educational classes can vary from specific disease types and treatment modalities, to general nutrition and cancer classes, to education on benefits of stress reduction, to talking about insurance and finances, et cetera. What their goal is, is to allow your knowledge to expand specifically on your cancer or your treatment options, benefits and coping styles. They have added benefit of meeting others who are either going through similar experience or are interested in similar topics and coping with cancer.

Movement and exercise, Dr Lolak talked on how this can really impact your emotional health. Many centers will offer movements such as yoga or other classes to their patients and, oftentimes, it can be free of charge if it's through your cancer center or through a supportive program in your area. Engaging in movement is not only good for your physical health, but as Dr Lolak said, it can be very helpful for your emotional health.

For stress reduction and mind body, these can be very similar, so some of these techniques can be placed in both categories, things like mindfulness, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, visualization, and other techniques that involve your mind and body, but also allow you the space to reduce stress or relax. Some of those other stress reduction techniques, we often recommend people to look at what has helped in the past, what has helped you deal with stressful situations before. In addition to that, looking at journaling, energy therapies, engaging in activities that you enjoy or distractions like Dr Lolak talked about, art making, meeting, spending time with family or friends, going to the movies, et cetera. Then in addition to this, acupuncture, massage and spiritual engagement.

-body can be very helpful for stress and overall physical and emotional well-being. yoga, Tai Chi, chingam, breathwork, meditation. Those are some of the most common techniques that would

fall into this category. Then, lastly, therapy and psychiatry, which of course Dr Lolak has spoken about.

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