



Women's Cancer Task Force

Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center

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Mission Statement: The SJRMC women's task force is comprised of women cancer survivors. We have come together to raise awareness and develop initiatives for women's health issues. Our initiatives include: recommending and implementing programs that relate directly to women and cancer: Promoting early detection, treatment options, supportive care and survivorship. The task force is committed to empowering the women of this community through knowledge and support in order to promote their optimal health.

Ovarian Cancer Support Group

Nancy White reported on the successful start to the Ovarian Support Group.

Meeting the first Monday of each month at the Edison Lakes Women's Health Center, the group has grown in members and is in the process of developing a number of exciting projects.

Along with being a positive support to women who have been diagnosed with ovarian cancer, the group is committed to educating others in recognizing symptoms and learning to be "pro-active" in health issues.

Their first project is to develop and distribute an attractive laminated bookmark, which can be placed in doctor's offices, women's centers, beauty salons, etc. In a prominent place on the information card will be our Nancy Drew logo.

Special thanks of Sandy & Brian Clauser of Express Press for donating the printing and laminating of the bookmarks. Sandy is a member of the task force!

"TO YOUR HEALTH" SJRMC OUTREACH - UNIVERSITY PARK MALL

Becky Gudorf, Director of "To Your Health", provided the task force with an update on the grand opening scheduled for February 15,16, & 17th. The task force was enthusiastic about participating in the festivities now being planned for the center. A focus group was formed to meet with Becky and her staff to plan the events. Mark those dates on your calendar! We will need plenty of help in staffing the Women's Cancer Task Force booth on those days!

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Another project in the planning stage is "The Apron of Wellness Becomes You".... This apron, featuring our Nancy Drew "lady" will be ready for production and sales as soon as we can get costs on the project completed. The apron will be sold throughout the community and the packaging will contain information on cancer awareness and wellness materials.



SWEET ANGEL... THERE IS ONLY ONE APRON that protects you... THE "APRON" of Knowledge! PAY ATTENTION, ASK QUESTIONS, REQUEST APPROPRIATE TESTS, AND NEVER STOP THINKING AND ALWAYS Hoping... ALWAYS! you ARE A precious MIRACLE.

Raising funds from this project will support our Women's Task Force endeavors.



Television Commercial Update

Message: Women need to arm themselves with information to be their own best advocates. Women must share their concerns with their physicians.

The focus group planning the commercial has met and is in the production phase at this time. Lou Pierce, of Big Idea Company, LLC. has agreed to accept this project, which will be funded by the Task Force and SJRMC.

Task force members reported on the efforts of the group shepherding this project. Members of this focus group are: Becky Gudorf, Geoff Huys, Joan Lennon, Dr. Michael Method, Melinda Pierce, Tim Sexton and Nancy White.

It is our hope to tape the commercial during January for distribution during February 2002.



REPORT OF EMPLOYER COMMITTEE:

One of the concerns of the task force has been the lack of information among women with a diagnosis of cancer in regard to insurance coverage. A number of women have faced obstacles in getting needed tests or treatments. Some have even had their insurance cancelled after diagnosis.

Others have expressed a desire to see more coverage for complimentary treatment and exercise/wellness programs similar to what is in place for cardio-rehabilitation.

Since Notre Dame is one of the largest employers in our community focus group was formed to explore these issues. It was hoped that this might serve as a model in working with other employers.

Barbara Carmichael, Barb Roche and Jo Mitton met recently with Denise Murphy, Manager of Benefits at Notre Dame. The results of that meeting were submitted to the task force on 12/5. The group reported that, although the university would be open to an exercise program for their employees and families...opening to the community at large may be more difficult. This aspect will take some further investigation.

"The committee will obtain research information on the success of the WISE program, the Mind /Body Program of SJRMC and statements from the medical community that endorse these programs and support the cardiac model for cancer patients" according to the report.

In addition, Barbara Carmichael reported on some very innovative programs already in place in the Honeywell Corporation.

In conclusion, with insurance cutbacks it is unlikely that most of these programs will find coverage under insurance payouts. Our focus group will concentrate efforts toward encouraging employers to open their facilities and support programs as a community service.

The goal is for the participants to pay no fee or a nominal fee to participate.



W.I.S.E. PROGRAM: WORKING OUT FOR STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE

One of the central initiatives of our task force has been the effort to establish an exercise program for women patients and survivors of cancer. To this end, the focus group will be investigating programs that are research/evidence based which are proven to enhance the quality of life issues involving cancer survivorship.

Jeanne Johnston, a Doctoral student in Exercise Physiology, Indiana University presented her program during a power point presentation at our December meeting. Jeanne would be delighted to see this program implemented in our community.

Her only request, that if implemented, it would keep the name WISE, because of her personal commitment to a dear friend who is a survivor.

The program manuals have been shared with both Dr. Method and Dr. Carol Ann Royer and further discussions are planned to explore funding and implementation.

An interview is being planned with Brian Jorgensen, a student of Ms. Johnston, who is completing his Master's work at I.U. this spring.

Jan Petty will serve as the point person for our exercise programs for cancer patients and keep the task force informed on the progress.

TASK FORCE MEETINGS

The Women's Task Force will not meet in January. Our next meeting is Wednesday, February 13, 2002 in the Radiology Conference Room of SJRMC; the noon meeting will include a light lunch.

Nancy White will cover the Women's Task Force desk in my absence. Any calls or emails directed to our phone: **(219) 472-6095** will be answered by Nancy during this time. She will also respond to emails. **THANK YOU NANCY!**

A special thank you to all of you for your generous support during the formation of the task force. Recently when asked about the task force I sat down and attempted to put into words the commitment I sense from all of you.

"Each woman has had a wide range of experiences in her personal battle with cancer. Each story is unique but what we all share is a bond so deep that it strengthens our commitment to make a difference for other women. This is why we support the work of the task force. We know that unfortunately each day, new women are added to our numbers. We want to make the path they travel a little easier. We want them to know that they need not travel that path alone."

- Joan Lennon



A special thank you to Dr. Method for his belief and support of the task force as well as his commitment to women's health issues in our community.

Thanks also to the staff of SJRMC Oncology Research and Support, especially Tammy Kickliter and Stacey Polk for all their efforts on behalf of the task force.

Happy Holidays to all of you and your families.

