

# Finding hope while living with cancer

*“We love the help and support we get from everyone here. Some days it’s all that gets me through as the mom of a cancer patient.”*

This is one of many comments in our Brandmeyer Patient Resource Center guest book. Glancing through the book gives you an idea of the work we do from this small but significant room inside the University of Kansas Hospital’s Cancer Center.

Our resource center, supported by a gift from the Joe and Jeanne Brandmeyer family and their company, Enturia, provides information on specific types of cancer, treatments, support groups and more. We offer computers with Internet access, books, videos and other materials.

Patients with all types of cancer visit us — the newly diagnosed, those undergoing treatment, and survivors. Our role is to provide them with the information and support they need.

Throughout my nursing career, I’ve given hope to people who experience difficult, life-changing situations. People who have cancer need, above all, to maintain hope. I try to help them see their situations in a hopeful way.

Patients are overwhelmed when they learn they have cancer. They are understandably anxious and hardly able to deal with the news. We can help by informing them of their options and by meeting their emotional needs. Many patients ask, “What do I do now? Get a second opinion? Seek other treatments?” We provide the best answers for each patient’s individual needs.



MARK McDONALD

After more than 30 years of working with cancer patients, I’ve collected many stories of people who have beaten the odds. “Chances for survival” are statistics and should be taken with a grain of salt. Instead of allowing patients to focus on the negative, I share hopeful stories.

Some patients lose their battle with cancer. After getting to know them, you can tell when they’re ready to end the fight. It’s important to give them permission to do this. At this time, we offer them as much support as possible by arranging for them to see a counselor or by helping them hold on until they can say goodbye to their families.

Just as we provide support for patients, we also help their families. We helped a teenage patient with a serious bone marrow cancer and her family get through the diagnosis and stem-cell transplant that followed. Later, when the patient died, her mother still needed care. I gave her a

journal to document her feelings and memories, and she continued to visit the center for quite some time.

A cancer diagnosis affects the patient and an entire community: family members, friends and co-workers. They all need support and hope. That’s our role at the Brandmeyer Patient Resource Center.

*Lynn R. Marzinski*

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**FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES**

Give to the Brandmeyer  
Patient Resource Center at

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contact Kate Migneron at 913-588-4497  
or [kmigneron@kumc.edu](mailto:kmigneron@kumc.edu).