

March Blog: Spring! A Time of Hope and Renewal

March is my time to Celebrate the coming of Spring and my Birthday! I am so grateful to share my special day with my husband, 'children' and grandchildren. It is also a Celebration of 28 years that Jack is **Living with Cancer**.

Cancer is an awful disease to face, but thankfully there are an increasing number of resources available to patients and caregivers over the past 15 years. One of the potential resources available is seeking a consultation with an expert in the field to partner with your current medical team.

There are so many types of cancer and each has very specific features and treatments. There are new drugs coming along almost every month and each patient is 'unique'.

What works for 1 person may not work for another. It can be so confusing and overwhelming for the patient and the caregiver. The relationship you have with your physician and health team is vital – but often it can be enhanced by a consultation with another expert.

You are entitled to ask your oncologist/hematologist for a referral to a specialist for a consultation or '2nd opinion'.

It doesn't mean that you don't like or trust your current doctor, but no one knows everything and your priority has to be to make sure you get the best and latest information.

A 2nd opinion/consultation can help the Caregiver as well as the Patient.

There is so much information to take in about all the recent clinical trials and studies in oncology. Having a specialist review current treatment and explain the latest in the cancer that your patient has can reduce both of your anxieties.

Cancer should be a 'Team' effort between you-the caregiver, your patient, and the cancer experts. There are side effects and consequences for every treatment and knowing what they are, can help you make better decisions.

Reassurance can often be the best 'result' you can get from a Specialist consultation.

Reassurance about the great care one is already receiving can give you greater peace of mind. We have so much responsibility and having an 'expert' who is objective and also knowledgeable helps us make better choices and reduces our stress.

Access to new clinical trials that aren't available at your current treatment facility is another great benefit of a consultation.

There are many exciting new drugs and having access to these may have a profound impact on your cancer patient's quality of life and overall **Survivorship!**

Spring is coming and getting a 'fresh perspective can help you and the one you care for.

By sharing and working together, we can build a Cancer Caregivers Community and improve the quality of life for the patient and caregiver!

Warm Regards,

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www.azmyelomanetwork.org www.cancercaregiversaz.com

Next month, learn more about what other cancer caregivers are doing!