NEWS BRIEFS

Congratulations to Dr. Eugene Beaupre, formerly a director of the Maine Cancer Research & Education Foundation, who has been elected President, Maine Division, of the American Cancer Society.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Following the success of the Cancer in Children Symposium, a second-day-long educational program is being planned for the spring of 1980. Tentatively titled Current Advances in the Management of Breast Cancer, the program will be aimed primarily at general surgeons and other interested physicians. The Maine Cancer Research & Education Foundation will support this meeting in conjunction with the American Cancer Society, Maine Division, and the Southern Maine Radiation Therapy Institute.

On October 31st, Doctor Emil Frei III, Director, Sidney Farber Cancer Institute, will conduct Medical Grand Rounds at the Department of Internal Medicine, Maine Medical Center. That afternoon medical oncologists will discuss Tumor Kinetics, Implications for Cancer Care at the University of Southern Maine’s Center for Research and Advanced Study. This meeting is sponsored by the Maine Cancer Research & Education Foundation. The Maine Cancer Research & Education Foundation also will support an Ear, Nose and Throat Tumor Symposium scheduled to coincide with the Maine Otolaryngology fall meeting in Portland. Otolaryngologists from Maine and New Hampshire will be invited to participate.

CANCER CARE PLAN

by Ronald Carroll, M.D.
Head, Medical Oncology, Maine Medical Center

Cancer describes more than 100 disease states of multiple causes. With present optimal methods of diagnosis and treatment, only 40 percent of those who develop one of these illnesses will survive it.

Methods of treatment are changing rapidly. To achieve the best immediate results, current optimal methods of treatment must be used statewide. Communication and collaboration among physicians and institutions whose primary role is to research and develop new methods of treatment is vital. A two-pronged approach would assure this end:

Cooperation Among Physicians and Institutions in Maine

When a person incurs cancer he or she experiences the following:

Symptoms -- Medical Evaluation -- Diagnosis -- Staging -- Prognosis -- Treatment Planning -- End Result, either long term survival without evidence of disease or recurrence and death.

Physicians throughout the state should be able to agree on common elements of cancer terminology and staging (a formal statement of extent of disease).

The vehicle for achieving this is site specific worksheets developed by collaborating physicians. They should list the criteria for diagnosis, workup, staging, prognosis, treatment by stage and rehabilitation for a specific cancer. Worksheet information should be arranged so as to (a) be available to the treating physician, (b) become part of the hospital record, (c) be structured to enable entry as data on a computerized data processing system. These forms should be revised and updated periodically.

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in large part by the Maine Cancer Research & Education Foundation. Dr. Robert McAfee, Portland surgeon and keynote speaker, struck a note of hope in his remarks regarding the progress in the overall management of malignant disease.

Lynn Ringer of Denver, Colorado, a founder of the American Cancer Society's CanSurvive Program and herself a former cancer patient, discussed how to provide support, both formally and informally, to afflicted people. She emphasized the importance of communication, honesty, and hope in maintaining patient integrity during the coping process.

A panel of former cancer patients, on a very personal and informal basis, later participated in Ringer's remarks by discussing what they themselves had experienced. Panel members represented support groups including Osteomy Club, New Voice Club, Candlelighters, Reach to Recovery, and other organizations active throughout Maine.

On the second day, Dr. Raymond Berte, Professor of Rehabilitation at Springfield College, Massachusetts, and himself a former cancer patient, presented from both a personal and didactic viewpoint, useful solutions to common questions faced by all patients. Dr. Berte, having undergone a laryngectomy several years ago for cancer of the vocal cords, used esophageal speech continuously for two hours in a remarkable demonstration of what can be achieved through dedicated rehabilitative efforts.

Next, Dr. Gerald Kooscher, a psychologist at the Sidney Farber Cancer Institute, moderated a panel of four young adults, each of whom had had cancer during childhood. They discussed in a dramatic and open way how cancer, in its various forms, can be met and successfully overcome.

After lunch, an interactive panel of patients, clergy, nurses and physicians concluded with a discussion of mechanisms useful in providing solutions to social, psychological, economical and physical problems, the inevitable companions to any encounter with cancer.

At its conclusion, a regional executive of the American Cancer Society described the conference as one of the finest she had attended.

CANCER IN CHILDREN

Symposium at Maine Medical Center

by Stuart G. Gilbert, M.D., Radiation Oncologist, Southern Maine Radiation Therapy Institute

More than 50 physicians and allied health professionals attended the first educational symposium supported by the Maine Cancer Research & Education Foundation. Cancer in Children, a day-long event held at the Maine Medical Center on April 7, attracted people from all parts of Maine as well as New Hampshire.

We thank you for your support and hope you will help us enlist the support of your friends and neighbors.

Larger institutions in Maine are already using these worksheets. Data generated from the worksheets could act as materials for cancer education at conferences throughout the state.

• Collaboration with a Cancer Research Institution

The principle function of a cancer research institution is, by definition, the development of new knowledge regarding cancer, and its clinical expression of new methods in either diagnosis or treatment. New methods of treatment evolve from clinical trials. A cancer research institution can fulfill its responsibilities more effectively if it maintains a network of institutions (hospitals) where data are collected systematically. Those of its clinical studies deemed appropriate can be implemented by qualified people within the network and the data returned to the research center. Cancer can be systematically reduced by such interaction over many years.

The Maine Cancer Research & Education Foundation, as a group of concerned, independent citizens can influence the course of cancer care in Maine by encouraging and supporting the above plan of action.

Participants in Living With Cancer: Accent on Hope were treated to an upbeat and moving two-day experience. Moderated by Dr. J. Howard Hannemann, the conference aimed to promote a better understanding between those who experience cancer and those who care for them, clergy and medical personnel, providing patient support. It was held on May 10th and 11th at the Augusta Civic Center, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Maine Division and Funded.