



Maine Breast Cancer Coalition News & Views

Winter 2008

www.mainebreastcancer.org

1-800-928-2644

Beyond Ribbons to Revolution Advocacy Training Conference

The quality of health care is an issue on everyone's mind. Some of today's top thinkers and policy makers on how quality care affects breast cancer will be featured at the National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund's **16th Annual Advocacy Training Conference**, "Beyond Ribbons to Revolution", April 26 through April 29, 2008 in Washington, D.C.

Join women and men from across the country and the world as you learn to be an educated and effective grassroots breast cancer advocate. As the nation's premier breast cancer advocacy event, this conference brings together hundreds of participants to hone their advocacy skills and learn about the latest in breast cancer science, research and policy.

Some of the world-class speakers at this year's conference include:

Carolyn Clancy, Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality: on how national quality care efforts really impact people's lives.

Shannon Brownlee, journalist and fellow, New America Foundation: on the role of overtreatment in the American health care system.

Richard Rettig, author and social scientist, Rand Corporation: on medical evidence and the hard lessons learned from bone marrow transplantation.

To register or find out more visit www.stopbreastcancer.org or call toll-free 1-866-640-0969.

Need-based scholarships are available.

Support Service Fund 2007 Report

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition **Support Service Fund** provides financial assistance for breast health or breast cancer related needs to underserved Maine people. The Fund assists low-income, uninsured, or underinsured people who don't qualify for, or whose particular needs aren't covered by other assistance programs. Since the Fund began in 2000, we have awarded grants to more than 900 Maine residents who had nowhere else to turn for assistance.

The following are statistics for our 2007 grant program:

- Number of people receiving grants: 145
- Counties represented: all Maine counties
- Total amount awarded: \$74,000
- Grant range: \$21 to \$800
- Age range of applicants: 22 to 90

Representative items and services funded in 2007:

- breast imaging (mammography and ultrasound)
- chemotherapy
- radiation treatments
- lab/pathology
- radiologist readings
- surgeon/physician fees or copays
- lymphedema compression garments
- prescriptions
- travel expenses to treatments
- wigs/ turbans
- prostheses
- genetic testing
- temporary living expenses for people in breast cancer treatment
- many other support services

To find out more about the Support Service Fund or to apply for a grant call Maine Breast Cancer Coalition toll free at 1-800-928-2644 or download an easy-to-complete application from our web site at www.mainebreastcancer.org

The Support Service Fund is currently supported by generous contributors including Susan G. Komen For the Cure: Maine Affiliate, the Maine Cancer Foundation, the Borman Family Foundation, the York Hospital Breast Cancer Survivors' Group, the Greater Bangor Women's Ski/Snowboard Club, the Fraternal Order of Eagles Pink Sock Foundation, Stonewall Kitchen, Inverness Medical Innovations, PATCO Construction, dedicated fundraisers by organizations and businesses, individual contributions by members and supporters of MBCC, and the many hours donated to administration of the fund by the Support Service Fund Committee.

Reconstruction Surgery Not Always Discussed With Breast Cancer Patients

(American Cancer Society press release 12/21/07)

A new study finds that most general surgeons do not discuss reconstruction with patients before surgical breast cancer treatment. The analysis shows that only one in three patients eligible for mastectomy or breast conserving surgery have such discussions. The study is published in the February 1, 2008 issue of *CANCER*, a peer-reviewed journal of the American Cancer Society.

The option of breast reconstruction has increased treatment choices for women with breast cancer. Women with early stage disease who are not likely to need post-mastectomy radiation are considered eligible for reconstruction at the time of surgery. However, little is known about how often surgeons discuss breast reconstruction with patients.

Led by Dr. Amy Alderman of the University of Michigan Medical Center, researchers surveyed 1,178 women aged 79 years or younger who had undergone a surgical procedure for stage I, II, or III breast cancer between December 2001 to January 2003.

The researchers found only 33 percent of patients had a general surgeon discuss breast reconstruction with them during the surgical decision-making process for their cancer. Surgeons were significantly more likely to have this discussion with younger, more educated patients. Patients who discussed reconstruction with their surgeon were more willing to consider having a mastectomy and were more than 4 times likely to undergo the surgery. The findings suggest that discussing reconstruction will impact women's decisions regarding initial surgery for their breast cancer.

According to the authors, these results have important implications for patient care and policy. "This research suggests that patients should be informed of all options in order to be educated consumers of healthcare and ensure maximal breast cancer treatment decision quality," they conclude. "Our results suggest a need for comprehensive breast cancer treatment decision aids, including information on initial surgery and other treatment options such as reconstruction."

Article: "Understanding the Impact of Breast Reconstruction on the Surgical Decision-Making Process for Breast Cancer" Amy K. Alderman, Sarah T. Hawley, Jennifer Waljee, Mahasin Mujahid, Monica Morrow, and Steven J. Katz. *CANCER*; Published Online: December 21, 2007 (DOI: 10.1002/cncr.23214); Print Issue Date: February 1, 2008.

To access this and other cancer-related press releases, go to the American Cancer Society website at www.cancer.org. Click on "Press Room", then "Press Releases".

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's Mission

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition is dedicated to making a difference in the health of Maine people through:

Financial Support for underserved people with breast cancer or breast health needs

Advocacy for breast cancer research and legislation

Education to promote knowledge about breast cancer and quality care

National Breast Cancer Coalition News

Guide to Quality Breast Cancer Care Available Online

The National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund's free, easy to read, online *Guide to Quality Breast Cancer Care* helps patients:

-evaluate the quality of their health care

- understand medical evidence in order to make informed decisions

-find and get the highest quality care

The guide is structured around six core values: access, information, choice, respect, accountability, and improvement.

To download this free guide go to www.stopbreastcancer.org and click on *Guide to Quality Breast Cancer Care*.

Congress Increases Funding For Department of Defense Breast Cancer Research Program

This past November the Senate and House approved \$138 million in funding for the 2008 Department of Defense Peer-reviewed Breast Cancer Research Programs (DOD BCRP).

"This funding is a major victory for the continuation of innovative and significant breast cancer research," said Fran Visco, president of the National Breast Cancer Coalition. "The DOD BCRP was launched in 1992 in response to NBCC's campaign for increased federal funding for quality breast cancer research. Across the nation, women and men with breast cancer and their families look to this program for cutting-edge breast cancer research." To find out more about this and other National Breast Cancer Coalition legislative priorities go to www.stopbreastcancer.org

Breast Cancer Awareness License Plate Goal Has Been Reached

Maine LD 775 "An Act to Create a Special License Plate to Support Breast Cancer Services" was introduced in the Maine State Legislature and required 2,000 pre-reservations by December 31, 2007. *The 2,000 reservations goal has been met, so the plate can go into production in October 2008.*

The proceeds from this specialty plate will be split equally between three beneficiaries: the **Maine Breast Cancer Coalition** for our *Support Service Fund*; the **Maine Cancer Foundation** for their *Women's Cancer Research Fund*; the **Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program** for their *Mammogram Fund*.

If you reserved one of the first 2000 plates, the state has been notified and they will issue vouchers for you to use when the plates become available. You can use the voucher for yourself or give it to a friend.

If you did not reserve one of the first 2000 plates and wish to reserve a plate, do not be concerned. When the plate is made available in October 2008 anyone can get one at that time, thanks to the commitment of the first 2000 people.

Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program Expands Program to Assist 35-39 Year-Olds

The Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program provides free mammograms and Pap tests to women age 40 and older who have no health insurance or have health insurance that does not cover mammograms or Pap tests, and also meet income guidelines. The program has recently expanded and is currently providing services for women ages 35-39 that qualify. Besides program eligibility, a woman age 35-39 must:

- have seen a doctor, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner for a breast issue and need further testing
- OR**
- have an abnormal Pap test result or have not had a Pap test in 5 or more years

For more information call 1-800-350-5180, press 1.

PATCO Construction Launches "Pink Key Project" To Benefit the *Support Service Fund*

PATCO Construction is a family owned and operated Maine business. "Like many families, our extended corporate family has experienced both the triumph and the tragedy that is breast cancer," says owner, Mark Patterson. "For over 25 years, PATCO has built its reputation on quality, dependability, integrity - and on doing the right thing. Finding a cure for breast cancer is everyone's responsibility. The Pink Key Project is how PATCO, as a business leader, can help make a difference."

For every building (residential or commercial) under contract in 2008, PATCO will contribute \$500 to The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's *Support Service Fund*. "The financial toll that cancer takes only compounds the physical and emotional one," says Patterson, "By earmarking these funds specifically for the *Support Service Fund*, we're helping women right here in Maine who might not otherwise have access to these important services." **For more information about PATCO or the Pink Key Project go to www.patco.com.**

Casting For Recovery Retreats for Women Who Have Experienced Breast Cancer

Casting for Recovery (CFR) is a national non-profit support and educational program for women who have or have had breast cancer. CFR provides an opportunity for women whose lives have been profoundly affected by the disease to gather in a beautiful, natural setting and learn fly-fishing, "a sport for life." Just as importantly, the retreats offer an opportunity to meet new friends and have fun.

The weekend retreats incorporate counseling, educational services and the sport of fly-fishing to promote mental and physical healing. Founded in 1996, Casting for Recovery offers free retreats across the country.

Casting For Recovery retreats provide lodging, meals and professional instruction to the participants at no cost. Any woman who has experienced breast cancer is eligible to attend a retreat (with medical clearance from their physicians). Trained facilitators staff each retreat including: a psychotherapist, a health care professional (e.g. physical therapist, nurse), and four fly fishing instructors.

A Casting For Recovery retreat will take place at Tim Pond Camps in Eustis, Maine from July 18-20, 2008. *The deadline for registration is May 9.* For more information or to register visit www.castingforrecovery.org, email info@castingforrecovery.org or call toll-free 1-888-553-3500.

Join Us!

If you are reading this newsletter and are not yet a member of the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition, please consider joining us. Membership is only \$15 for individuals or \$100 for business, organization, or corporate memberships. Please send us the membership form on page four of this newsletter (or a photocopy). Or consider becoming an active member. We meet the second Wednesday of every other month from 5:45 to 7:30 P.M. at the Alford Cancer Center in Augusta. Please call 1-800-928-2644 first to confirm meeting dates.

We would like to express our appreciation to the following people, organizations, or businesses who recently held fundraising events for the Support Service Fund:

The University of Maine Black Student Union held a roller skating party and raised \$118 for the Fund.

The Greater Bangor Women's Ski/Snowboard Club, long-time contributors to the Fund, raised \$4,000.

Another group that raises money for the Fund every year, the **York Hospital Breast Cancer Survivors' Group**, donated \$3,200 in proceeds from their annual "Walk For Hope."

Raining Jane, a Los Angeles-based band, "passed the hat" for the Support Service Fund at an October concert in Portland and donated \$83.

Capello Hair Studio and Day Spa conducted fundraisers for a total of \$610.

American Legion Post 157 in New Auburn donated the use of a hall to **Carlene Sperry** and **Sue Callahan**, who raised \$775 with their "Horizon of Hope" fundraiser.

Fraternal Order of Eagles #618 held a fundraiser and donated \$500 to the Fund.

Inverness Medical Innovations of Scarborough has selected the Support Service Fund as the recipient of their fundraising efforts this year and recently sent a \$1762.50 contribution.

Stonewall Kitchen of York, Maine selected the Support Service Fund as the recipient of their annual charity initiative. They donated a percentage of the total sales for one of their products this past holiday season, for a total donation of \$5,427.

Longtime supporters **Thomas College Peer Advisors** donated the \$61 proceeds of a pink ribbon sale they held in October.

PATCO Construction of Sanford launched the "Pink Key Project." (See article on previous page.)

We recently received generous individual donations for the Support Service Fund from:

Jennifer Hitchcox and Vance Huntley
Randa Shirland
Dodo Stevens
Scott Whitney
Christine Bennett
Laura and Stuart Piltch

Thank you for your generous contributions!

How You Can Help

The **Support Service Fund** is only partially supported by grants from major foundations. MBCC also relies on contributions from local groups, businesses, or individuals. If your community group, business, or organization would like to dedicate all or part of the proceeds from a fundraising effort to the **Support Service Fund**, contact grants chairperson Christine Haiss at 207-938-4018 or czh@tdstelme.net.

Or please consider a tax-deductible donation of any amount. See the donation and membership form below for details. Checks should be made payable to MBCC. Please write "**Support Service Fund**" on the memo line.

MBCC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Yes! I want to support the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's work.

- I want to be active in the *Maine Breast Cancer Coalition*. Please contact me.
- I want to become a member of *MBCC*. Enclosed is a check for \$15 (individual) or \$100 (business or organization membership) payable to *MBCC*.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (day) _____ (eve.) _____
Email _____

- I want to make a tax-deductible contribution. Enclosed is a check payable to *MBCC* for \$ _____.
In honor/memory of _____
- I want to donate the following gifts or services:

Please mail your check for membership and/or contribution with this form to:

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition
11 Bangor Mall Blvd. Suite D
PMB 362
Bangor, ME 04401-3650

