



Connecting Hope  
and Medical Science

# Focus ON THE Search

Clinical trials advancing the quest for cancer treatment, management, and prevention.

Fall 2009 ■ Issue 10

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The **CCR**P Trial Participant Advisory Council (TPAC) is a group of clinical trial participants that come together for bi-annual education meetings, volunteer to share their experience on a cancer clinical trial, and volunteer for the organization. For more information, or to become involved, please contact CCRP at (303) 777-2663.

## TPAC Member Learns More About Clinical Trials at Mayo Clinic

and renews her commitment to telling others about the benefits of clinical trials

Barb Hansen, a CCRP TPAC member, said "yes" to CCRP's Executive Director Jane Hajovsky when Jane issued a general invitation to TPAC members to accompany her to the annual North Central Cancer Treatment Group (NCCTG) Patient Advocate Symposium. NCCTG is based at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. CCRP is a member of NCCTG and opens many clinical trials developed at the Mayo Clinic from this national group. This is an opportunity Jane tries to make available to one TPAC member each year.

The Patient Advocate Symposium is a series of workshops held over three days at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. The workshops focused on the importance of input from the patient/advocate to the scientist as they develop and offer the clinical trials sponsored by NCCTG. Included in the activities were plenty of opportunities to

learn more about the Mayo Clinic itself. Both Jane and Barb were very impressed with the deep history of medicine that the Mayo Clinic reflects, and also with the clinic's incredible art collection that contributes to the healing of the whole person.

Here's what Barb has to say about her experience at the symposium. "I was really able to satisfy my interest in medical care from the scientific viewpoint. I was also reminded again that we in clinical trials are part of something real important." Barb was particularly excited to hear about the future of healthcare, specifically how it is anticipated that because of the sequencing of the human genome, healthcare will become very individually-based. Barb would be glad to talk in greater detail to our readers about what she learned at the symposium as well as about her experiences on a clinical trial. You can reach Barb at [cbhansen@comcast.net](mailto:cbhansen@comcast.net).

Several facts about Mayo Clinic: Mayo Clinic is the first and largest integrated, not-for-profit group practice in the world. At its three locations, Mayo Clinic serves 3 million people annually. Mayo is the family name of a father and two sons, who in the late 1800s joined with the Sisters of Saint Francis to open a 27-bed hospital. The first non-family member joined the practice in 1892, a practice that has since grown to over 3,600 physicians



Jane Hajovsky, CCRP Executive Director, and Barb Hansen.

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## Focus ON THE Search

*Focus on the Search* is a quarterly publication of resources for people who are current or past participants in cancer clinical trials in Colorado and for people who have been recently diagnosed with cancer.

Colorado Cancer Research Program (CCRP) is a non-profit organization, a partnership of 17 Colorado community hospitals, and their affiliated doctors, dedicated to the advancement of cancer research and care close to home. CCRP is a Community Clinic Oncology Program, one of 50 such programs nationwide.

### CCRP's Partner Hospitals

Boulder Community Hospital  
Exempla Lutheran Medical Center  
Exempla Saint Joseph Hospital  
Longmont United Hospital  
McKee Medical Center  
Medical Centers of Aurora  
North Colorado Medical Center  
North Suburban Medical Center  
Penrose-St. Francis Health Services  
Porter Adventist Hospital  
Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center  
Rose Medical Center  
St. Anthony Hospitals  
St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center  
St. Mary's Hospital  
Sky Ridge Medical Center  
Swedish Medical Center

## Survivorship: It Helps to Have a Plan

There are approximately 12 million cancer survivors living in the United States. Part of being a successful survivor is having a survivorship care plan. A survivorship care plan includes two basic elements: a record of care and standards of care.

**Record of Care:** Upon discharge from cancer treatment, every patient should be given a record of all care received and important disease characteristics. This record should include diagnostic tests performed and results; tumor characteristics; dates of treatment; surgeries and therapies provided.

**Standards of Care:** Upon discharge from cancer treatment, every patient and their primary health care provider should receive a written follow-up care plan incorporating available evidence-based standards of care. This plan should include information on possible late and long-term effects of treatment, information on possible signs of recurrence, information on the potential insurance, employment, and financial consequences of cancer, recommendations for healthy behaviors, just to name a few.

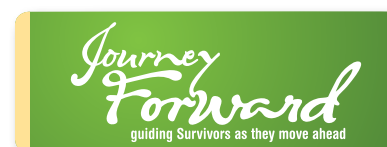
### Questions survivors should ask their doctor:

- What treatments and drugs have I been given?
- Do I need to seek follow-up care?
- Will I get cancer again?
- What should I do to maintain my health and well-being?
- Even though I survived cancer, will I feel differently physically?
- Will I have trouble getting health insurance or keeping a job because of my cancer?
- Are there support groups I can turn to?
- Now that I've finished treatment, who on the cancer team will be responsible for monitoring my care?

(Excerpted from *Cancer Survivorship Care Planning*, www.iom.edu)

### About Survivorship

- <http://www.cancer.gov/ncicancerbulletin/040709/page2>
- <http://dccps.nci.nih.gov/ocs/>
- <http://oncolink.org/oncolife/index.cfm#>
- <http://www.canceradvocacy.org/toolbox/>
- <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Survivorship>
- <http://www.canceradvocacy.org/resources/survivorship.html>
- **Journey Forward** is a program that offers a kit of materials for both patients and physicians, including an electronic Survivorship Care Plan Builder for the doctor and electronic Medical History Builder for patients, <http://www.journeyforward.org>



## This Issue's Featured Clinical Trial

### NSABP-B-42 for Breast Cancer

- This clinical trial is a Phase III randomized study of Letrozole in postmenopausal women with ER and/or PgR-Positive Invasive Breast Cancer who have completed hormonal therapy consisting of either five years of an aromatase inhibitor (AI) or up to three years of Tamoxifen followed by an AI (for a total of five years).
- Adjuvant hormonal therapy has been shown to significantly improve disease-free and overall survival in patients with resected stage I, II, or III breast cancer. For many years, treatment with Tamoxifen has been the gold standard for women with hormone receptor-positive tumors. However, recent results from studies evaluating third generation AIs as adjuvant therapy in postmenopausal women have challenged the primacy of Tamoxifen for this subset of patients.
- Patients are randomized to one of two treatment arms. Arm I: Patients receive oral Letrozole once daily. Arm II: Patients receive oral placebo once daily. In both arms, treatment continues for up to five years in the absence of disease progression or unacceptable toxicity. After completion of study treatment, patients are followed annually.
- No data currently exist on the optimal duration of AI therapy and no data exist on the optimal duration of AIs when used as extended adjuvant therapy after five years of Tamoxifen. This clinical trial will attempt to provide data in these two areas.
- The trial is sponsored by the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project (NSABP) and National Cancer Institute (NCI).
- The trial started in August 2006, aims to enroll 3,840 participants, and the estimated primary completion date is October 2015.
- For more information, go to <http://www.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/NSABP-B-42> or <http://breastcancerupdate.com/medonc/2008/1/geyer.asp>

### TPAC Member Learns More About Clinical Trials at Mayo Clinic

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and scientists and 50,000 allied staff. What has made Mayo Clinic unique is its coordinated care model.

P.S. A little bit more about Barb. Barb's cancer experience started on December 1, 2006 with a diagnosis of multiple myeloma. Her treatment involved a stem cell transplant that took place in October 2007. Ninety days after the transplant, Barb started on a clinical trial, a maintenance trial to find if remission is extended by taking an ongoing drug. She is a big fan of clinical trials. She says, "In a clinical trial you get the standard of care, and you may get something in addition that really works for you." Part of Barb's survivorship is her involvement in the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society where she is a volunteer for the First Connection program, a program in which she works one-on-one with others diagnosed with myeloma.

If, as a TPAC member, you are interested in attending next year's Patient Advocacy Symposium at Mayo Clinic, remember to say "yes" when Jane calls for volunteers. And for additional information about the symposium's sessions, here is a link to the sessions' reports <http://ncctgpatientadvocates.org/symposium/presentations.html>.

## Early Breast Cancer Detection Saves Lives – Pass It On

When breast cancer is detected early, 96 percent of patients can survive after five years. But if the cancer isn't caught until the latest stage when the disease has spread well beyond the breast, the percentage drops dramatically, to 21 percent.

That's why the Colorado Department of Health and Environment encourages women over age 40 to routinely take advantage of early detection methods, including mammography and clinical breast exams. About 75 percent of the 3,700 breast cancers diagnosed each year in Colorado are detected early.

Women who cannot afford a mammogram and/or are uninsured can receive free screenings through the Women's Wellness Connection at more than 120 health care providers across Colorado. For details, contact Women's Wellness Connection at 1-866-951-WELL (9355) or visit [www.womenswellnessconnection.org](http://www.womenswellnessconnection.org). Information is available in English and in Spanish.

## Get the latest cancer research news from National Cancer Institute, delivered straight to your desktop.

Regular features include:

- Latest findings from major scientific journal
- In-depth articles and special reports
- Clinical trial information
- Legislative updates
- Federal agency news



Sign up at <http://www.cancer.gov/cbsubscribe.aspx>

## Drive for the Cure

After a week delay due to inclement weather, golfers hit the links at Valley Country Club to raise money for Colorado Cancer Research Program in the 3rd Annual "Drive for a Cure." Thanks to our sponsors, which included Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers, CSW Safety Services, Parker Adventist Hospital, COPIC Financial, and Mendel & Company Construction.



The Longmont United Hospital team poses, (from left to right) Warren Laughlin, Neil Bertrand, Becky Herman, and Josh Roberson.

## Payroll Deduction Campaigns — Choose CCRP

CCRP is a member of Community Health Charities of Colorado (CHC), an alliance of Colorado's premiere health organizations that have joined together to raise charitable contributions in the workplace through payroll deduction campaigns. Donations are used to support member charities and provide funding for medical research, patient services, and community outreach.

The mission of CHC is to provide employers with a customized employee workplace giving campaign that impacts the health of Coloradans. Simply choose Colorado Cancer Research Program through payroll deduction. CCRP is part of the Federal Government's Combined Federal Campaign; for that campaign, you can select charity #67051. CCRP is also a part of the Colorado and Denver employee campaigns: Colorado Combined Campaign #0961 and Denver Employees Combined Campaign #2554.

If you do not have the option of workplace giving available at your company, call Martha Chamberlin at the CHC office at 303-758-0069 to find out how to register.

*Focus on the Search* is published quarterly by Colorado Cancer Research Program. Should you not wish to receive this newsletter in the future, please contact CCRP at (303) 777-2663.



### Step Up for Cancer Raises Funds for CCRP

CCRP was one of the beneficiaries of the inaugural Step Up for Cancer event that took place on August 2nd at Dick's Sporting Goods Park. Through the success of the event itself and individual fundraisers, CCRP raised over \$4,000 in this first year event and looks forward to participating in 2010.



CCRP is proud to have been selected for a donation of \$2,500 from Newmont Mining Corporation. Thank you!



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