



spotlight on health

“Grey’s Anatomy” Star Patrick Dempsey Joins *Breakaway from Cancer* Initiative as New Survey Findings are Announced on Employer Support for Cancer Patients and Caregivers

(NAPSA)—Real-life drama prepared “Grey’s Anatomy’s” Patrick Dempsey for his new role as spokesperson for *Breakaway from Cancer*™, an initiative that raises awareness and funds for cancer patients and their caregivers.

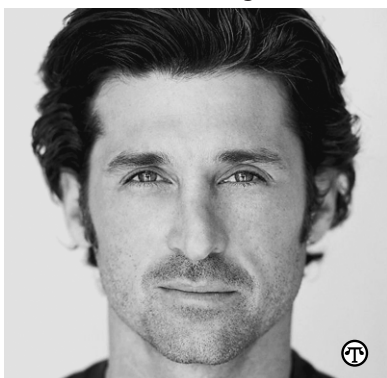
“My mother is a two-time ovarian cancer survivor,” said Dempsey. “I hope by supporting *Breakaway from Cancer* and sharing my family’s personal experience, others will be inspired to seek the support they need.”

Established by Amgen, *Breakaway from Cancer* funds benefit The Wellness Community (TWC) and the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS). TWC and NCCS are nonprofit organizations that provide free support to people affected by cancer and cancer care advocacy, respectively. In addition to engaging Dempsey’s support, Amgen, TWC and NCCS are announcing findings from a nationwide cancer and careers survey.

“A diagnosis of cancer is a physical and emotional burden for both patients and caregivers and the weight of this burden is compounded when also dealing with career and workplace issues,” said Ellen Stovall, president and CEO, NCCS. “But, there is help and hope, and it is critical that patients and caregivers have access to credible and accurate tools and resources.”

The survey results indicate one in five patients say they missed a treatment due to a work-related conflict. However, the results also reveal that employer support of both cancer patients and caregivers is strong: 75 and 79 percent of patients and caregivers, respectively, characterize their employer as supportive while dealing with their own illness or that of a loved one.

“These findings tell us that receiving support from an employer may be as simple as asking for it,” said Cynthia Schwalm, vice



Dempsey joins the *Breakaway from Cancer* initiative to raise awareness and funds for cancer patients and caregivers.

president and general manager, Amgen Oncology. “We sincerely urge anyone dealing with cancer to do just that, especially since keeping a consistent treatment schedule is one of the most important weapons in the fight against cancer.”

The survey further reveals career sacrifices made by caregivers mirror those reported by cancer patients who remain employed during their treatment. One-fourth of caregivers and patients report missing five to 15 days of work and slightly more than one-third of patients (35 percent) said their caregivers made significant career sacrifices while assisting them during their illness.

“In most cases, the caregiver needs support just as much as the person with cancer, and for the 45 percent of respondents who said they would like online support, they can find it online at The Virtual Wellness Community or one of our 21 nationwide centers,” said Kim Thiboldeaux, president and CEO, TWC.

More information about *Breakaway from Cancer*, including the survey findings, limited-edition designer *Breakaway from Cancer* T-shirts and Dempsey’s involvement, is available at www.breakawayfromcancer.com.