

Health Bulletin



Support For New Cancer Patients Vital, Says Rob Lowe

(NAPSA)—Help and hope are now available for newly diagnosed cancer patients, thanks to a new national program offering one-on-one counseling with people who've been through a similar cancer experience. Patients and their loved ones can sign up to be matched with support volunteers by calling toll free 1-866-BY-MY-SIDE (866-296-9743) or logging on to www.ByMySide.com.

The support network, called Voices of Experience is a new feature of the multimedia By My Side™: Taking Charge of Cancer Treatment education program. By My Side offers a wealth of free information about the “visible” side effects of chemotherapy, such as nausea and hair loss, the “hidden” side effects such as infection, anemia and emotional duress, and provides tips on preventing or managing them.

“It’s tough when you hear the word cancer for the first time. My dad, like most patients, had a tough time absorbing information about his disease and treatment when he was first diagnosed,” says actor Rob Lowe (*The West Wing*), spokesperson for By My Side.

Voices of Experience is the result of a partnership between the Cancer Hope Network and biotechnology company Amgen, sponsor of a recent cancer patient survey. A surprising finding: 36 percent report not having any caregiver to whom they could turn for support.

“The caregiver is an incredibly vital resource for patients to have by their side as they start cancer treatment,” said Lowe.

“When my dad was fighting cancer, I wish that we had been able to talk to others who had been through the same type of cancer and treatments and who could



Actor Rob Lowe says support from others can help many new cancer patients cope with the disease. When his father, Chuck, battled lymphoma Rob would have found a resource like By My Side: Taking Charge of Cancer Treatment helpful.

warn us that serious and potentially life-threatening side effects, like chemotherapy-related infections, were possible,” said Lowe.

His feelings are not unique. According to the survey, 84 percent of cancer patients report that they felt they needed, but were unable to find, several specific types of help at the time of their cancer diagnosis: talking to other people who had cancer, being able to connect with someone else who had been through a similar experience, and getting information on what they or their loved ones might experience.

“The support network helps patients and families look beyond the diagnosis, cope with cancer treatment and its side effects and start living life to its fullest once again,” says Wanda Diak, managing director of Cancer Hope Network. “In short, we strive to make a difference in their fight against cancer.”