

cancer care



Dignity Health.

French Hospital Medical Center

Hearst Cancer Resource Center

Hearst Cancer Resource Center

About Cancer Care

Hearst Cancer Resource Center at French Hospital Medical Center provides comprehensive support services for all cancer patients in our community at no charge, and appreciates the generosity of our donors who make it all possible.

2024 Holiday Reflection for the Hearst Cancer Resource Center:

The Light Within

by Peter Kang

As we enter the holiday season, I find myself reflecting on the theme of light—its warmth, its guidance, and its presence in our lives, especially during times of challenge and uncertainty.



Peter Kang

Manager of Mission
Integration and
Spiritual Care
French Hospital
Medical Center

For many of you navigating the journey of cancer, I know that moments of darkness can feel overwhelming. I've witnessed the fear and sorrow that can accompany this path. Yet, even in those toughest moments, I want to remind you that there is always light to be found. Perhaps it shines through the compassionate care of a nurse who takes the time to listen, or in the supportive words of a fellow patient who understands what you're going through. Sometimes, it's the quiet strength you discover within yourself, guiding you through each day.

The holidays remind us that we can also share this light with one another. Each of you has the unique ability to bring joy and hope into someone else's life—whether through a small act of kindness, sharing your story, or simply being there for someone who needs it. Together, we can create a supportive community that reflects the spirit of the season.

As we celebrate this holiday season, let us remember that, like the candles lit during this time, our hearts can be beacons of hope and comfort. May the light within you shine brightly, offering peace, healing, and love to all those in your care and to each other.

With heartfelt wishes for a season filled with light and joy.

The Hearst Cancer Resource Center invites you to attend an educational presentation

Confident Caregiving



**Nell Bennett, MSW,
LCSW**

Licensed Clinical Social
Worker & Psychotherapist

Stepping into a caregiving role is a natural response when an adult loved one is in need. However, we can sometimes find ourselves feeling unprepared or overwhelmed with all that comes in the care partner journey.

You're invited to join us for an informative and supportive presentation regarding caregiver resources and self-care opportunities. Learn about local community resources designed to support family caregivers and participate in a creative activity that helps increase understanding of one's support system.

Thursday, November 14, 2024

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Wacker Family Auditorium

(in the Copeland Health Education Pavilion at French Hospital)

1911 Johnson Avenue, San Luis Obispo

Space is limited; reservations required. Please call Hearst Cancer Resource Center at 805.542.6234 or email us at HCRC@dignityhealth.org

Highlights:

- **Community resource review for caregivers; practical and emotional wellness opportunities**
- **Reflective activity: Increase your understanding of who you care for and who cares for you**



MEET THE PRESENTER NELL BENNETT, MSW, LCSW

Nell serves as a Family Consultant at the Coast Caregiver Resource Center. She has worked extensively with family caregivers across a multitude of health conditions, including oncology. She supports patients and family members impacted by chronic illness, unexpected health challenges and family adjustment to disability.

Look Where We Were this Year!

Over the last 12 months the HCRC helped to support many cancer patients, survivors, and their families with much needed support. We have been able to connect with so many people within our community and continue to provide quality care that can be depended on. We have had over 15,000 connections and helped to support so many patients this year! Of the 32 programs that we provide, we have been able to assist people with medical questions, emotional support, interpretation, wigs, educational lectures, and many other amazing services. The support of our community is what keeps these services going and helps to support those who are facing a cancer diagnosis. So thank you all for the last 12 months and we can't wait to see what 2025 has in store for us!



**Share the Hope 2024—
HCRC Annual Fundraiser
at Hearst Castle**
(Left to right) Julie Neiggemann, RN, MSN, OCN; Ashley Hahn, MSW, LCSW; Ramie Castilleja, MBA; Lisa Steinbeck, CTR



Cal Poly Baseball Game Changer Fundraiser
(Left to right) Julie Neiggemann, RN, MSN, OCN; Ramie Castilleja, MBA



SLO Blues Baseball (Left to right) Ramie Castilleja, MBS; Julie Neiggemann, RN, MSN, OCN; Ashley Hahn, MSW, LCSW



SLO Pride 2024 Ramie Castilleja, MBA



Downtown SLO Farmers Market



Ashley Hahn, LCSW
Social Worker

Coping with Cancer during the Holidays

By Ashley Hahn, LCSW

The holiday season is often a time filled with long held traditions and inspires hope for the new year ahead. But for those with cancer the holiday season may come with more complicated emotions. The holidays may feel overwhelming with the cultural expectations and pressures to maintain past rituals and time with family or friends.

The tips below can help you cope with cancer during this holiday season.

- **Make a plan and know it is okay to say no this year.** You might consider making a simple plan A and a simple plan B so that you can adjust plans depending on how you feel at the moment. Remove the activities that trigger stress and schedule desired activities for when you have the most energy.
- **Focus on self care.** Be aware of your feelings, identify things that make you feel good and prioritize those things. It is okay to adjust holiday traditions this year or consider the opportunity for new traditions. Make yourself a priority and eat well, exercise, sleep and schedule those activities that refill your cup.
- **Be mindful.** Focus on the present moment of the holidays in whatever form you experience. Consider gratitude and connection with family and friends. Focusing on what you can control will help you cope with the holiday season.
- **Reach out for support.** Whether family, friends, church, neighbors, a counselor, coworkers or other cancer patients, remember there is support available and you don't have to feel alone this holiday season.
- **Make space for grief.** Many people experience grief during the holidays because loved ones who have passed are not physically here to celebrate with us. Consider honoring your loved ones with a new tradition that feels sacred to you. There is no right or wrong way to navigate grief during the holidays but there are practical ways to minimize negative feelings and helpful strategies to cope with grief this time of year.

Did you know?

An informational packet on how to manage grief during the holidays is available.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to coping with cancer over the holidays because the challenges vary from person to person. Focus on what will help you enjoy this holiday season ahead. Please know the HCRC is here for you. If you would like an informational packet on how to manage grief during the holidays you can call or email Ashley Hahn, LCSW, at 805.542.6234 or Ashley.Hahn900@commonspirit.org.



Share gratitude

Celebrate this Holiday Season with the HCRC

With the holidays just around the corner and the New Year upon us, we hope that this holiday season is one that you can celebrate with the Hearst Cancer Resource Center.

In the spirit of giving during this time of year, many people take the time to reflect on what they are grateful for. People often choose the gift of giving upon reflecting on all for which they are grateful. Throughout this year, the Hearst Cancer Resource Center team has been humbled by the continued generosity of our community. This generosity, which extends into the season of giving, allows our programs to continue growing to aid in the support of cancer patients, survivors and their families. With the continued support from donors and community businesses throughout our 15-year journey, we thank you for your continued kindness.

Come see our float in the Downtown SLO Holiday Parade on Friday, December 6 in downtown SLO! You'll be able to see HCRC staff members, French Hospital staff members, HCRC volunteers, and cancer survivors on our float. Please visit DowntownSLO.com for more information.



Scan the QR code here to donate online to the HCRC. Additionally, you may contact the French Hospital Foundation at 805.542.6496 or visit www.supportfrenchhospital.org. Checks can be made payable and mailed to French Hospital Foundation, 1911 Johnson Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 (please note "HCRC" in the memo of your check).



Staff Spotlight

Nancy Bracewell

HCRC Volunteer and Cancer Survivor

Q: How long have you worked at HCRC?

I have volunteered with HCRC since 2017. My husband and I moved from the Bay Area in the fall of 2016 to the Central Coast.

Q: Why is HCRC important to you and/or this community?

The HCRC is such an amazing place for any stage of cancer, whether newly diagnosed, going through treatment and afterwards. I sometimes wear my volunteer hat, other times I wear my two-time breast cancer survivor hat. To know that there are resources, support, and wonderful staff to help you along your way is invaluable. When I was able to meet with patients in person again after the pandemic it was so meaningful to me.

Q: What is something personal that you enjoy and would like to share?

I have a fun volunteer job at HCRC. Myself and another volunteer run the Beauty & You program. It is an honor to meet patients where they are in their journey and listen to their stories. I always learn new things from survivors. Helping someone feel better, sharing stories and having a laugh is something I cherish deeply.

Turn to us for answers

HEARST CANCER RESOURCE CENTER

1941 Johnson Avenue, Suite 201
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
805.542.6234
Monday–Friday
9AM–4:30PM
dignityhealth.org/hcrc
Please call for an appointment

Thomas Spillane, MD
Medical Director

Shannon D’Acquisto
Director, Cancer Survivor
HCRC@dignityhealth.org

Julie Neiggemann, RN, MSN, OCN
Nurse Navigator

Ashley Hahn, MSW, LCSW
Social Worker

Eloisa Medina
Patient Navigator
805.786.6130—en español

Angela Fissell, RD
Registered Dietitian

Ramie Castilleja, MBA
Program Coordinator

Lisa Steinbeck
Cancer Registrar

IMAGING CENTERS

FHMC San Luis Diagnostic Center
1100 Monterey Street, #210
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
805.542.9700

FHMC Women’s Health and
Imaging Center
1941 Johnson Ave., Suite 104
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
805.597.6700

SLO ONCOLOGY & HEMATOLOGY HEALTH CENTER

715-B/C Tank Farm Road
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Direct: 805.543.5577

Care Providers:
Thomas Spillane, MD
*Medical Oncology Director of
Clinical Trials*

Gorgun Akpek, MD, MHS
Robin DiBiase, NP, OCN
Daniel Lewis, MD
James Malone III, MD
Lin Soe, MD
Tim Soucek, PA

SLO INFUSION CENTER

715-B/C Tank Farm Road
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Direct: 805.786.6140
Nurse Line: 805.786.6144

Susan Diaz, RN, OCN
Director

DIGNITY CANCER CARE CENTRAL COAST

Mission Hope Cancer Center
1325 East Church Street, Suite 102
Santa Maria, CA 93454
805.219.HOPE (4673)

850 Fair Oaks Avenue
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420
805.474.5300

Kathleen Sullivan, PhD, RN
*Vice President, Post Acute Care and
Health Services Operations*

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Dignity Health Home Health
& Hospice
800.549.9609

Palliative Care
805.739.3950

COASTAL CANCER PARTNERS

The Hearst Cancer Resource Center has partnered with these organizations to bring programs and activities to the community:

17 Strong
17strong.org

American Cancer Society
cancer.org

Camp Kesem Cal Poly
campkesem.org

Cancer Connections
cancerconnectionslo.org

Cancer Support Community
cscslo.org

Cancer Well-Fit Program
cancerwell-fit.com

Central Coast Dragon Boat Association—Central Coast SurviveOars
ccdba.org

DreamMakers SLO
dreammakersslo.com

Hats for Hope
hatsforhope.com

Jack’s Helping Hand
jackshelpinghand.org

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
lls.org

SabesWings
SabesWings.org

Surfing for Hope
surfingforhope.org

Teddy Bear Foundation
teddybearcancerfoundation.org

Hearst Cancer Resource Center

Mailing address:
1911 Johnson Avenue,
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Street address:
1941 Johnson Avenue, Suite 201,
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

HCRC Advisory Committee

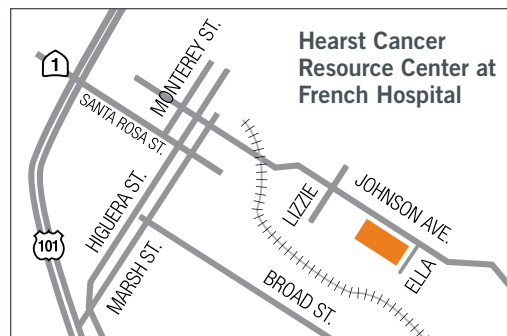
French Hospital Medical Center

Sue Anderson—PRESIDENT AND CEO
Julia Fogelson, MSN, RN—CNE
Tessa Espinoza—CPO
Thomas Vendegna, MD—CMO

Committee Members

Sandy Dunn — CHAIR	Susan Minker, MD Debbie Nicklas
Gayle Cekada, MD	Don Oberhelman
Leslie Coe	Lauren Rava
Edwin Hayashi, MD	Colleen Russell, DPT
Jack Hearst	Thomas Spillane, MD
Stephen Hearst	Jackie Starr
Stephen Hilty, MD	Christine Williams
Cathy Johnson	
Robert Johnson, MD	
Noreen Martin	

Hearst Cancer Resource Center



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Commission on Cancer Community Cancer Program

1911 Johnson Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA, 93401
805.542.6234

