

PRESIDENT'S NOTE – GIVING BACK

In June 1995, a man was diagnosed with prostate cancer. His doctor said there were three treatment options: surgery, radiation, and hormones. "The decision is yours," the doctor said, but very little information was available. Other doctors confirmed the three choices with recommendations biased by their respective area of expertise.

When the man spoke to other patients, their attitude was one of resignation. Some said, you can come out of this incontinent, impotent, or both. Even after being treated, they told him, you're not likely to be around for very long.

About a year later, he met another patient, one who was diagnosed in 1991 when the cancer was advanced because he had previously been misdiagnosed. For him, there had been almost no information at all.

I am the patient first mentioned, and Dr. Jim Lewis is the second. Jim went on to write five books providing the information prostate cancer patients need to make optimal treatment choices. Our mission through ECPCP is to help patients by providing the information we did not have access to, information that will help them to manage the disease so they live longer with the highest quality of life possible.

Each day dawns with new information on therapies, medications, and research results. In 2001, ECPCP provided information to and counseled 19,000 patients.

With greater visibility, more patients call each day. All patients are helped regardless of their affiliation with ECPCP. After six years, ECPCP still has a full-time staff of only two people, three part-timers, and three volunteers. A total of 88 cents of every dollar goes to provide services to patients. By comparison, the American Cancer Society spends only X percent every dollar on services. But membership fees and contributions are not enough to cover our costs.

If every reader of this newsletter would contribute just .33 a day, \$10.00 per month, ECPCP could cover its costs and provide more services. Won't you help us so that we will be better able to help you when you need us?

Ralph Alterowitz
President, ECPCP