**Cancer Support Services** 

## NEWSLETTER Issue 4 May 2023

#### What CSS Means to Me

Dr. Dawn J. Gayapersad, Ph.D, M.B.A, B.Sc.

I became a lifetime member before Covid. A volunteer. And a champion for the charity.

What is it about Cancer Support Services that keeps me engaged? In this newsletter and their website you can learn what they do. Whenever I think I got it, I am surprised by things they do for the community of patients, caregivers, doctors, nurses. And for how they support me. I am a survivor and I want to see others survive and thrive.

If you have ever met Jan and you hear about what she does, you see in action her commitment, and you may glimpse why we cherish her work.

Did you know that during Covid she was a rebel and broke protocol to take medical supplies to patients? Did you know that she regularly calls patients who are members of CSS during Covid and even today?

Did you know that she checks in with the cancer ward at the QEH frequently? Did you know that she felt the suffering of these patients in C12 so immensely she was moved to initiate a Palliative Care Enrichment Programme for the nurses at C12? Did you know that she talks to doctors about patients care and CSS has subsidized the cost of treatment for low income patients?

Jan uses her gifts 24/7 because cancer is neither 9-5, seasonal, age or wealth discriminating.

When I first went to CSS I joined the Victorious Ladies Group. We are a group of all ages. Some of us are talkative and some are quiet. We often laugh out loudly. We encourage each other to be amazing survivors, to be role models for one another, and to care for each other when we need it. Did I say we were fun? When new members meet us they often comment about how happy and full of joy we are.

I am constantly concerned about the financial state of the organization. During the pandemic, ashfall, and the hurricane, funding fell because fundraising was paused. The offices still had to be maintained, utilities had to be paid, patients had to be supported, medical supplies had to be subsidized. Why is giving to support this organization so hard to do?

Their work is often invisible and intangible. Support becomes real when you or your loved one gets diagnosed. How do you support a patient at the moment of diagnosis? How does stigma affect their mindset causing delays in treatment while their bodies

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keep deteriorating? How do you encourage a patient to seek help? How do you get guidance on navigating this journey? How do you grasp the costs mentally and financially and physically?

What do you do – you call CSS, that's what you do.

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PREVENTION, Get screened.

#### Fact Sheet

The Barbados National Registry published their "2022 Cancer in Barbados Report" for the years 2013 - 2018. They found:

- 25% of annual deaths were cancer related. The top 3 diagnosed and deaths were Prostate, Breast and Colon cancers. Between 2020 and 2021 cancer deaths trended upwards.
- There were more cases in men than women.
- Prostate cancer cases decreased between 2016 and 2018.
- Breast Cancer deaths trended upwards.
- Pancreatic Cancer cases increased in 2018.
- Cervical cancer cases and deaths decreased.
- For the first time, in 2018, the number of cases in the top 5 for women changed to Pancreatic cancer.
- And in both men and women Multiple Myeloma and Colon cancers were in the top 5.

If you are interested in reading the most recently published Patient or Health Professional Data about a type of cancer please contact me at dawnstudiescancer@gmail.com or call CSS.

### Cancer Support Services - Through the Highs and Lows



Ms. Janette S. Lynton, STE | Executive Director - Cancer Support Services

On April 17, 1996, some 27 years ago, 19 colleagues, friends, people with a passion to serve those less fortunate, joined together at an Attorney-at-law's office to form a new charity, Cancer Support Services.

Our Charity's beginnings were humble, we had no money, no place to call home but we had a mission, one put into words eloquently by former President and Secretary Carlyle Best:

#### "Cancer Support Services is committed through a spirit of volunteerism to the care of persons with cancer and to bring comfort and support to the affected relatives and dependents."

Initially, the charity operated from my home and I took up the mantle, serving as the inaugural President for the first 3 years.

However, I was not alone; there are so many persons who deserve recognition, applause and my sincere thanks for their selfless service, persons like Mona Rouse who using her expertise in the legal field served as inaugural Secretary, guiding the charity in the right direction and preparing every document using her own paper and typewriter as we couldn't afford one to solidify Cancer Support Services' credibility as a non-governmental organisation in Barbados. Our first Fundraising Tea Party was even held at the back of Mona's house on her lawn and we all chipped in to make it happen.

Another who played an invaluable role in our early days is Irene Wiltshire, a faithful member from the start who single handedly spearheaded Cancer Support Services' Meals on Wheels programme where she cooked all the food from her location, purchasing the groceries from her own pocket and enabled the organization to distribute food to our clients. Irene also provided pudding and souse and made fish cake batter, organized cake sales to raise funds for the charity.

When the charity was exploring setting up a pain management center in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Irene purchased the Tens Machines and PC Pumps and also helped to sponsor a physician and patient to go overseas to train with Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center from her own resources.

Then there is Joan Reid who would run up and down this island with me whether it be to collect funeral donations or simply to facilitate a cake/fishcake sale.

Our first ever funeral donation came from the service of thanksgiving for the sister of our now Chairperson Brenda Robinson and that programme continues to this day.

If anyone needed help, the 17 of us would come together, pool our resources and purchase items for those who needed us.

These persons and many more, some of whom have now passed on made Cancer Support Services the charity it is today!

From the very beginning, all of the charity's donations and assistance were distributed through a means assessment. Our challenge today however, is that the needs of those journeying with cancer often outweigh the availability of funds. The charity has also grown to a point where space is needed to facilitate Prostate Specific Antigen Screenings, Meetings and to store equipment for our loan service, to offset the cost of rent which is extremely high. Nonetheless, as a charity we are working hard, hosting small fundraisers to raise funds in order to continue helping others.

I want to commend the Victorious Ladies Beyond Surviving and the Conquering Men Support Groups of Cancer Support Services who among themselves come up with ideas that can boost the organization.

I'm also thankful for all the relationships formed over the years, from clients to donors and even some dear friends and of course, to all the members of Cancer Support Services, most of whom are now in their winter years, having grown with the charity and are still helping in any way they can. I thank them for their unwavering commitment and support.

I owe a special thank you as well to my children Richelle and Ryan, who sacrificed so much during their younger years to assist Cancer Support Services. I will always be grateful to them.

I cannot forget to thank corporate Barbados for the vote of confidence in the work of our charity and for the kind contributions given towards our programmes and by extension, our clients.

Cancer Support Services could not have made it without you all, I couldn't have made it without you all and the recent National Honour I received from the Government of Barbados, the Silver Trident of Excellence, I share with you all.

Here's to you and here's to the continued work of Cancer Support Services.

## Nurse Enrichment Programme 2023



Cancer Support Services facilitated the Nurse Enrichment Programme 2023 for Nursing Personnel of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital between March 14 and April 6 at the Barbados Yacht Club. Facilitators included Chaplain Paul Leacock, B.Sc., M.Div, Rev. Anderson Kellman, MA, Dr. Stephanie Wellington, MD (USA).



## So, you have been diagnosed with cancer, what next?

#### Joy Ann Joseph

For many, a cancer diagnosis can be a profound shock, many persons remain in that state of fear, fear of the unknown. The strain caused by such a diagnosis does not have to be burdensome, yet it is. The fear of the "Big C, as some still call it can be quite paralyzing. The reality is that many individuals give in to fear, and when this happens the results, can be fatal but, it does not have to be.

Having been diagnosed with breast cancer almost a year ago I am sharing a few tips which have been most helpful and healing for me during this journey. Whatever you do, do not give in to fear, fear cripples, it weakens and inhibits you from making rational decisions and can be detrimental to your well-being and any successful treatment outcome.

Create a supportive network around you... be selective with who you let enter your head. Take your advice from your medical team and those entrusted with your care. Learn about the cancer support services available to you through organizations such as the Cancer Support Services. Align yourself with persons who are also on the journey, as you share stories you empower each other. Research, learn all you can about your diagnosis and what treatment options are available to you to help you make an informed decision about your treatment.

Seek counsel, what I found most rewarding on my journey was, the ability to share my journey with others. I found that speaking about my diagnosis was most freeing and healing not just for me but for others. Do not be afraid to advocate for your self and for others, remember, you had a diagnosis...you are not the diagnosis or a number, you are still a human being worthy of dignity and respect.

Find a reason to live and live... put God in the center of everything.

Be bold, be brave and be visible...live while you are living.

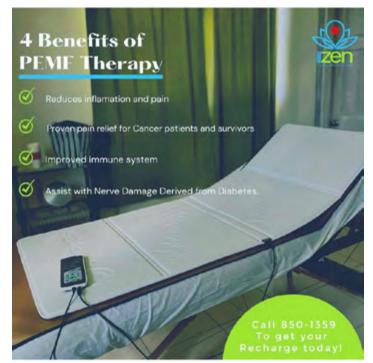


## PEMF - Upgrade Your Health

#### Dr. Sean Russell, MBBS, CCNM

The model of the human body is in conventional medicine is largely mechanistic, meaning that the body is looked at like a machine. The analogy being that machines have parts and systems - in a car for example there is an engine, wheels, suspension etc. The car would have a braking system, cooling system etc. Similarly the human body has a brain, heart, bones ,etc . as well as a nervous system respiratory system musculoskeletal system etc . We are all familiar with this approach. What we must also appreciate is that this model was proposed by Rene Decartes a French philosopher from the early 17th century. A lot has changed in the past 400 years including knowledge on how the human body works, whereby the mechanistic model is a simple easy to understand analogy of the human body, it is of course limited. We know now that the human body is also an energy system, each cell containing energy like a battery to the extent the charge across the cell membrane from the inside to the outside is measurable and it is known that damaged of diseased cells have a lower voltage than normal cells. It is also known that not only does the human body comprise of energy produced by the trillions of cells that comprise the body but that human beings also produce an energy field that projects into the area surrounding the body, this is also measurable and proven. It is known as well that certain EMF's –Electromagnetic fields – have a detrimental effect on human beings who get excessive exposure to these fields , for example ;power lines, cell phone towers, microwaves, and Xrays to name a few.

It is less widely known and even less widely accepted that certain electromagnetic fields have beneficial effects on the human body, indeed deeper understanding demonstrates that human beings are dependent on exposure to these fields to maintain good health. Pulsed electromagnetic frequency therapy (PEMF) uses this knowledge to provide treatments that improve people's health. The Earth produces and electromagnetic field that human beings are dependent on for proper cellular function and by extension good health. Reduced exposure to this electromagnetic field therefore invites poor body function and disease. Experiments have been conducted which prove this and papers have been written on it( -Magnetic Field Deficiency Syndrome and Magnetic Treatment, authored by Kyoichi Nakagawa, M.D.,. for example) PEMF therapy uses devices to produce electromagnetic fields similar to what the Earth produces and by exposing the body or body part to the field the individual derives the benefit of the exposure to the field. Benefits include increased energy delivered to the cells exposed to the field -the cells absorb the energy and with that energy they function better. Organs and tissues are all made up of cells so better function of the cells means better function of the organ or tissue of which they comprise. Cells communicate with each other in order for proper organized function of the human body- PEMF therapy enhances the intercellular communication.



Circulation has two critical aspects to good health first is delivery of nutrients namely oxygen to the recipient tissue and second the removal of waste products and toxins which result from work the cells of the tissue or organ does. PEMF has demonstrably shown improvement in microcirculation, microcirculation being the smallest part of the circulation where blood vessels become microscopic in size and the level where the exchange process of delivery and removal takes place. Some blood vessels are so small the red blood cells need to deform their normal shape in order to transit the blood vessel . PEMF enhances the ability of the red blood cells to do this deformation and therefore improve circulation by increased delivery of the red blood cells to the necessary sites. Red blood cells have a tendency to clump to together a process called rouleaux formation, the clump of the red blood cells impairs their ability to penetrate cells and do their job. PEMF therapy charges each blood cell so they repel each other and don't clump thereby improving their ability to enter tissue and perform their functions.

We can appreciate that considering the body from a paradigm of energy and understanding that Pulsed Electromagnetic Frequency (PEMF) therapy is a treatment where energy is being delivered to the body in such a way that the body can use it to improve its function. A wide range of medical conditions can be treated with PEMF therapy including Parkinson's disease, rheumatoid arthritis and other autoimmune disorders, osteoarthritis, sciatica, spinal stenosis, diabetic neuropathy, migraines. PEMF therapy is also useful as an adjunct in treating various cancers. It is important to note that because of the way PEMF therapy works it is very safe, with minimal side effects and can be used in conjunction with conventional medication, so one does not have to choose the therapy over medication but rather use it as an additional tool in maintaining good health and treating medical conditions. It can also be used to enhance athletic performance and work endurance. The therapy itself is quite simple, it is delivered through various devices, one of the most commonly device used being a mat where the person lies on the mat and treats the entire body one time. Treatments vary in time but typically can be 20-30 minutes and the frequency of treatment is determined by the condition and desired improvements the person wants. The human body is designed to thrive and keep itself healthy. Much of modern illness is due to lifestyle and environment and much of medicine is dependent on the body's ability to heal. PEMF therapy is using technology to deliver to the body what it requires from Nature. Remember the quote from the 18th century French philosopher Voltaire: The art of medicine is amusing the patient while nature cures the disease.

#### I Am Woman Hear Me Roar



The theme was "I Am Woman Hear Me Roar" for the Victorious Ladies Beyond Surviving of Cancer Support Services as they celebrated Women's History Month in March. The ladies were glowing and fashionable while giving testimony of how being diagnosed with cancer has affected their lives.

The décor and beautiful balloons in different colours signify the different types of cancers within the group.



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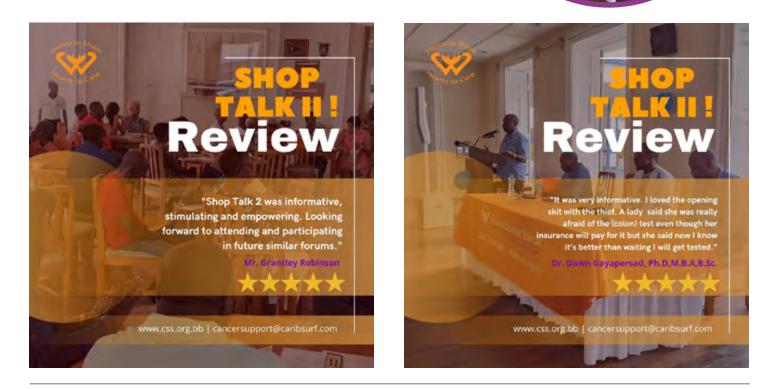


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## Shop Talk II: Ladies and Gents Let's Talk About Our Colon



Ladies and Gents Let's Talk About Our Colon with Dr. Sahle Griffith and Biochemist Mr. Stephen James on March 11 at the Barbados Yacht Club



## My Nursing Journey

#### Juliann Welch

My name is Juliann Welch, I am 44 years of age. I am from Barbados. I migrated to the UK in October 15th of 2021. I am a mother of three boys. 23,18, and 15. My journey to nursing began in 1998, when I was also becoming a mother at 19 years old.

This is when I met my mentors, two nurses, who made such a significant impact on my life that I carry to this day. After working an entire shift at Maurice Buyer Polyclinic, they would sacrifice part of their family time twice a week to take all of us young mothers to have classes with us, these classes were called Breast feeding Classes, despite the name they were far from just breastfeeding classes, these classes taught us not only how to care for our new additions to our family but it also taught us basic life skills. How to become virtuous women, how to cope with the struggles of life . These classes gave us purpose and the will power to fight to achieve the achievable in life, these nurses are responsible for many of us living our life dreams when we thought all was lost because we became mothers at an early age. From those classes, a principal of a school, managers of companies, entrepreneurs, and yes nurses and nurse managers were born. This is where I gained the passion to become a nurse.

It was a long road becoming a nurse. After all I was a mother and a wife and my family kept growing as I went on to have 2 more children before my family was complete. Through it all, those same nurses were always there to cheer us on, so the passion for nursing was always in my heart. In 2011, I enrolled in college to start the journey of my lifelong dream profession to become a nurse. Finally in 2014 when I graduated with an Associate's degree in Applied Science in nursing as a Registered Nurse, I did so with pride. I always carry myself professionally and I always give the best care I can to all my patients. I worked on surgical and medical units before I was transferred to the Oncology and Haematology Unit, I also worked the Oncology and Haematology Day Unit. This is where I found my true calling as a nurse. Oncology, haematology is a specialty where it pulls on everything in you as a nurse, compassion care, courage, communication, commitment and competence. I have had days where I hugged, cried with, sang to, and even read the bible with my patients and even their family members. It gave new meaning to the term holistic care. I had a dynamic team who encouraged and shared in the journey working on C12 at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It's there that I met two of the most wonderful people through the Cancer Support Services, that to this day play a significant role in my life, Jan Lynton and Chaplain Paul Leacock. Not only were they interested in the wellbeing of the patients but also the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all the staff members, on that unit. The classes I attended that were hosted by Cancer Support Services to enhance holistic care are my foundation for all care I administer for my patients and family members.

These nursing skills and experiences that I gained over



the years, prepared me to be senior nurse manager of the Quarantine Center in Barbados during the initial stages of COVID 19, for one year and a half. Many days I worked 24 hours because we didn't have many nurses who were willing to join the fight. I remember working for 6 weeks without any off days, 24 hours a day, this meant practically living at the quarantine center and always being on call. My duty as a nurse became very profound to me as I was the person who had to find solutions to any problems that arose and answers to persons who didn't understand the disease when I myself was barely understanding it. I had to employ critical thinking skills every day to the many patients, family members and even my staff, who looked to me for leadership in a time of uncertainty. With the grace of God I worked and gave my best always, with my nurses who never once gave less than the best, and our team leader Mr. Alvin Hart.

As the thirst for expansion of my knowledge increased, I realized that to explore my horizons towards becoming the best me in nursing that I can be, it would mean leaving my home and my family behind for some time. It was the hardest decision I have ever made in my life, and it tore me apart to leave them but I made the decision to migrate to the UK, again this is where Jan and Chaplain Paul along with my home church Christ Is the Answer Family Church, under the leadership of Reverend Edwin Bullen and his lovely wife Pastor Margaret Bullen played a significant role in my life as everything I was going forward to was new uncharted and unfamiliar. The encouragement and the prayers were unbelievable this taught me to always carry the bible verse Phillipians 4 verse 13 with me, "I can do all things through Christ who strengths me".

I was scared yes and lonely yes, but again life granted me two beautiful nurses to mentor me Rooba Kauppayamootoo and Jasmine Thomas. These ladies helped prepare us for the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), not only did they teach us about the OSCE, they taught us about life in the UK which I was very appreciative of. They made me feel welcome as part of the St. Georges Health Care Team. Nursing is my life and there is nothing in nursing that I am not willing to be a part of when the opportunity comes. It takes readjusting your mind set to the situation at hand and doing the job. I would implore any nurse who wants to broaden their opportunities and step out in faith and reach for nothing less than their destiny. In the month of October 21st 2022. I was nominated for and awarded the United Kingdom Royal College of Nursing's (RCN) Black History Month Rising Star Award for my hospital, with God all things are possible, the opportunities for nurses are endless, I encourage any nurse who wants a brighter path to open their minds to something new.



## **3 Lessons Learned From The Valley**

#### Dr. Stephanie Wellington, MD (USA)

Life happens to all of us. Whether it's challenges with health, career, family, relationships or personal issues, life is a cycle of peaks and valleys. We enjoy and celebrate the peaks. But the valleys disrupt our sense of well-being and turn our emotions upside down.

The valley is often regarded as a place of failure or setback. It is seen as a place that you want to get out of as quickly as possible so you can enjoy being in the flow of life once again.

But what if the valley is really a place of rest and even restoration?

I was enjoying life. In a flash it all changed. There I was in the Emergency Room trying to find a comfortable position in a chair next to the stretcher where a family member was lying. This wasn't our first time in the ER. The familiar feeling of heartache crept in. With it came a numbing feeling.

For the next few weeks life came to a halt. The plans that I had would be placed on pause as meals, watching movies, and sharing jokes and stories happened in the hospital room. Until he was discharged home, that was where you could find me.

The numb feeling would not leave me alone. It wouldn't budge.

I knew there were many things I could do, in fact needed to do, that might distract me, but my energy simply wasn't there.

I did my best to keep to my morning practices of prayer and meditation hoping it would create the opening to get back to living. But it just wouldn't be.

We have all been there. We have all been in the valley, wanting to get out, and just can't seem to find our way.

So, instead of trying to get out, I gave in.

I surrendered to the feeling and allowed myself to simply be in this place, knowing that it is temporary.

I allowed myself to accept that the joy of life would return when it was time, when I was ready to receive it. In the meantime I would no longer make myself wrong for the way I was feeling.

#### 3 Lessons Learned From The Valley

- 1. Be Still. Instead of struggling to get away from the valley experience, release the struggle and be still. The stillness provides rest for the mind, body, and soul.
- 2. Ask For Peace. If we can ask for the things we want in life, why not ask for peace. Typically when life's challenges show up, we search for the reason why. Why is this happening... again? That question often leads to frustration. Instead, learn to ask for peace. After all that is what's desired.
- 3. Look For The Guidance. Some of life's best solutions come as a result of the greatest challenges. It is in the toughest moments that we can deepen our faith, trust in God, and know that we are never alone.

Dr. Stephanie Wellington is a Board-certified pediatrician, certified professional coach, speaker, and founder of <u>www.</u> <u>NurturingMDS.com</u>

## Keep Driving

#### Rev. Anderson Kellman, MA

A few years ago I encountered what I would consider, a rare phenomenon. While driving to the north of the island, I encountered some torrential rain. The rain was so heavy that I had to turn on my windscreen wipers to the highest setting and even then, the windscreen's visibility was still poor.

I slowed to a crawl, fearing that there would be some flash flooding ahead or more so, that the road may be impassable. Still, I continued on but at a slower pace as though expecting greater challenges ahead. To my absolute dismay, I drove out of the rain.

Yes, you read that correctly. I drove out of the rain. There was a visible lining in the road where the rain had stopped and beyond which, the road was dry. A few cars had stopped to marvel at the phenomenon. Driving away, I began to reflect on what this experience had taught me about life.

Sometimes, in the midst of living, the rain begins to fall on our parade. Some individuals become despondent, depressed and disillusioned and they stop because life is so unfair. Then they turn around and look back at the litany of issues that have befallen them. All the people who have treated them unfairly, their parents, partners and, they begin to recite all the broken promises that they have death with over their lifetime.

Some even pull up the brakes and psychologically declare not to move another in because "it is not fair". They compare themselves with others, whose lives have been easier and sometimes even shake their fist at God for being so unreasonable with them. They wait for fairer weather to move on but fairer weather never comes. And even if it did, perhaps they would still not move on because their lives have become overloaded with anger.

Anger locks their wheels and immobilizes their engine. But those who keep driving fends the fear along the way. No need to change roads, become overly upset, no need to quarrel with God or complain about the rain. Just keep driving and you will find the sun.

Trust God to help you on your drive. So, keep driving.



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Our Mission

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Cancer Support Services, Ground Floor, Alpha Building, Dayrells Court Business Centre, Dayrells Road, Christ Church, BB14030 Tel: +1 (246) 228-7081 | Fax: +1 (246) 426-4770 email: cancersupport@caribsurf.com | website: www.css.org.bb



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