



## Nurse author shares story in **'BOTH SIDES OF THE BEDSIDE'**

Oncology RN pens book on her journey as a cancer patient

Southern California

By Carole Jakucs, BSN, RN, PHN

Most nurses think of themselves as having a strong ability to empathize with their patients. Orange County, Calif., resident Christine Magnus Moore, BSN, RN, was no different. With years of experience working as a nurse, including eight years in oncology, she felt she had a good grasp of what her patients went through during their hospitalizations and treatments. Then, while in her late 30s, she was diagnosed with stage 3 non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

As she began her treatment, Magnus Moore experienced a stark realization. Being a cancer patient was so intense on so many levels that it shook her to the core.

While she cannot pinpoint a defining moment serving as the impetus to write her memoir, "Both Sides of the Bedside: From Oncology Nurse to Patient, an RN's Journey with Cancer," published in March 2015, Magnus Moore said several small impressions during the course of treatment led in that direction.

"Suffering causes the kind of vulnerability that no one wants," she said. "My life was headed into this direction and the only way I could cope was by living minute by minute."

Her goal with the book, which covers her emotional anguish and her physical disabilities while undergoing chemotherapy, is not only to help cancer patients but also to enlighten nurses about the other side of the bedside. She hopes her story broadens their understanding of their cancer patients' challenges.

"As nurses, we do many tasks to prepare for a patient's arrival for treatment, for example, setting up their IV tray," Magnus Moore said. "But I would like to encourage nurses to think about this, what did the patient do to prepare? What challenges did they meet, physically, mentally and emotionally to get there?"

She encourages nurses to smile when talking to their patients, start with a friendly hello followed by sincere inquiries as to how their day is going and how they are feeling. All these endeavors go a long way in helping a patient who is struggling to survive, feel embraced and cared for, Magnus Moore said.

Her life as a cancer patient took her temporarily from being an independent working professional to an unemployed nurse on disability who was completely dependent on others. An incredibly active person for most of her adult life, Magnus Moore, who rode in a 50-mile bike race shortly before her cancer diagnosis, found herself barely able to walk up a flight of stairs one month later.

She underwent nearly a year of treatment, enduring eight cycles of chemo at her place of employment in California. Her colleagues became her caregivers. She felt odd at first, being the patient and not working by their side as part of the team. Holding them in high regard however, she trusted them and was comforted by the situation.

She eventually returned to work as an oncology nurse. A cancer survivor for 13 years, she left nursing five years ago to write about her intimate struggles as a cancer patient. •

Carole Jakucs, BSN, RN, PHN, is a freelance writer.

FOR MORE, visit [BothSidesOfTheBedside.com](http://BothSidesOfTheBedside.com).

## Author keeps busy with lectures, writing new book

Before writing about her cancer journey, Christine Magnus Moore, BSN, RN, had not been published, but she always enjoyed writing.

- She won an Excellence in Writing Award while in nursing school at Azusa (Calif.) Pacific University.
- Moore's memoir was recently recognized by the Southern California Writers' Conference with an Outstanding Nonfiction Award.
- Her article, "Scars of Survivorship," was published in the February 2015 issue of the Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing.

Magnus Moore plans to continue writing and return to work as a part-time RN. She said she is working on a second book that "combines inspirational quotes with practical advice for patients traveling through the cancer journey."

She also lectures to oncology nurses about her book and cancer journey, serves on her local board of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and co-founded a cancer comfort nonprofit group called YANA, which stands for "you are not alone." •

— Carol Jakucs, BSN, RN, PHN