



## Keynote Presentation

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### Survivorship care in cancer: An imperative for nurses

The cadre of individuals who are living after a diagnosis of cancer is growing steadily. In developed countries, as many as 78% of pediatric patients are alive five years following diagnosis, as are 60% of adult patients. With the anticipated increase in the incidence of cancer around the world and the success of treatment approaches, it is anticipated this cadre will continue to grow. Unfortunately, cancer survivorship does not come without cost. It is becoming increasingly evident there are late and long-term effects cancer survivors experience, both physical and psychosocial, that can compromise quality of life and increase the burden of suffering. As well, quality of life issues are different for survivors than for individuals at the point of diagnosis and treatment. Cancer survivors face a range of physical and psychosocial challenges. Up to 75% of survivors have health deficits related to their treatments, more than 50% live with chronic pain, 70% have experienced depression, and between 18% and 43% have reported emotional distress. Regardless of tumor type, there are commonly reported challenges: living with fear and uncertainty; changes in family roles; alterations in self-image and self-esteem; changes in comfort, physiological functioning and mobility; alterations in cognitive functioning; changes in employment and recreation; altered fertility and sexuality.

Clearly, cancer survivors are a vulnerable population. New approaches are needed to overcome the barriers, cancer survivors experience and ensure they receive appropriate care. This presentation will highlight the challenges faced by cancer survivors

and outline innovative approaches and nursing roles for providing care to this population.

**Biography:** Margaret I Fitch has a Bachelor's of nursing from Dalhousie University and Master's of science in nursing and Doctorate from University of Toronto. She is Professor (Adjunct) in the Lawrence S Bloomberg faculty of nursing and professor in the school of graduate studies at the University of Toronto. She is the Editor-in-Chief for the Canadian Oncology Nursing Journal. She maintains a research program in supportive cancer care. She was the founding president of the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology and served as the president of the International society of nurses in cancer care.

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