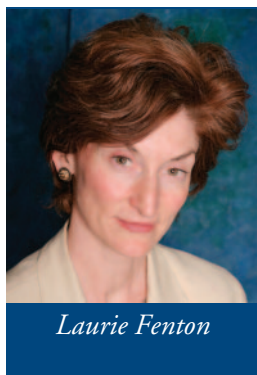


Patient Advocate Corner

The Lung Cancer Alliance



Laurie Fenton

By Laurie Fenton

The Lung Cancer Alliance (LCA) is the only national nonprofit organization providing patient support and advocacy exclusively to those living with or at risk for lung cancer. Its mission is to lead the movement to reverse decades of stigma and neglect by empowering those with or at risk for the disease, elevating awareness and changing health policy. Headquartered in

Washington, DC, LCA is committed to making lung cancer a national public health priority and improving survival by 50% by 2015. LCA's hallmark is its list of unique patient support programs.

LCA's programs include:

- Lung Cancer Hotline: 800-298-2436
- Phone Buddy Program, a peer-to-peer support network
- LCA Survivors Community, an online community
- lungcancerallianceblog.org
- LCA Clinical Trials Matching Service, powered by Emerging Med
- Lung cancer-specific educational materials

Through the Lung Cancer Hotline and Phone Buddy Program, LCA helps thousands of people affected by lung cancer. The Phone Buddy Program is a peer-to-peer support network made up of 150 survivors and caregivers who volunteer to share their experiences and serve as empathetic listeners. In addition to direct support, LCA recently expanded to online support through the LCA Survivors Community as well as the blog, lungcancerallianceblog.org. The LCA Survivors Community is a safe, trusted environment in which those at risk, those living with the disease, and those who love them can share and support one another through their individual journeys and experiences with lung cancer. The LCA blog keeps visitors current on LCA's advocacy.

As an extension of its commitment to empower those affected by lung cancer, LCA provides the LCA Clinical Trials Matching Service to ensure that patients diagnosed with lung cancer can include clinical trials in their treatment options. This special service helps patients and their loved ones navigate the challenging terrain of clinical trials through prescreening. LCA recommends that people conduct a clinical trial search each time they face a treatment decision. Now,

with more than 490 clinical trials listed and trained staff answering each query, the LCA Clinical Trials Matching Service is working to become the one-stop shop for lung cancer clinical trials information.

LCA not only supports patients, friends, and families, but also enables clinicians to offer supportive materials on where to turn for information and support. Through our quarterly *Spirit and Breath* newsletter, brochures, fact sheets, and other collaboratively produced materials, LCA reaches a quarter of a million people every year. Lungcanceralliance.org shares information on facing lung cancer, clinical trials, support groups around the United States, lung cancer news and events, and advocacy.

The advocacy area is where LCA has advanced most aggressively. LCA engages federal and state health policymakers, newsmakers, regulators, and opinion leaders to reverse 35 years of stigma and neglect since the declaration of the "War against Cancer." With its more than 20 state chapters, LCA is the movement representing lung cancer as a disease, not just a tobacco addiction, which deserves the same compassion and support as other diseases.

Last year, LCA launched the first ever national public awareness campaign for lung cancer; attained the first bicameral, bipartisan resolution declaring lung cancer a public health priority, which gained passage in the Senate; produced the first national Report Card on Lung Cancer, an annual benchmark of progress in lung cancer; advocated strongly to retain full levels of funding for National Cancer Institute translational research programs; secured state Lung Cancer Awareness Month proclamations; and filed a landmark Amicus Brief in the federal case against the tobacco industry seeking funds for independent lung cancer research and early detection.

Observing Lung Cancer Awareness Month 2006 and beyond, LCA will continue its innovative national public awareness efforts by adding national spokespersons such as Joe Buck, the "voice" of Major League Baseball; secure House of Representative champions for its congressional resolution; issue the 2006 Report Card on Lung Cancer and duplicate it at the state level; pursue every avenue for increased research and early detection support at both federal and state levels; and coordinate Lung Cancer Awareness Month activities around the country.

For more information and to get involved: phone 800-298-2436, log onto lungcanceralliance.org, e-mail info@lungcanceralliance.org.

Laurie Fenton is President of the Lung Cancer Alliance.