

Latvia's chief oncologist asoc.prof. Dace Baltiņa has begun writing a candid blog about oncology

RIGA, LATVIA, January 17, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Beginning in 2018, the Latvian Ministry of Health's leading specialist in oncology, associated professor Dace Baltiņa, has begun writing the blog - "Notes of Oncologist" – www.notesofoncologist.com. The blog will publish the professor's views, thoughts and recommendations to patients about oncology in general.

In recent years, Professor Dace Baltiņa, as the Latvian State's chief oncologist, has been at the forefront of a number of ambitious endeavours to reorganise the state of cancer treatment in the nation. Baltiņa has taken part in the creation of the Programme to Combat Cancer, has helped to collect and analyse the results of the implementation of screening diagnostics and helped to create the so-called Green Corridor to hasten and optimize treatment for cancer patients.

"When my colleagues urged me to write a blog, I agreed without much fuss. I've worked in oncology for over 34 years – as a scientist, as a general practitioner and as a teacher. However, I believe the most important experience I've gained is the 10 years I participated in support camps for cancer patients, which are organised by the Dzīvības koks (Tree of Life) patients' organisation. They opened my eyes to a completely different reality of cancer treatment – the necessity for proper information for cancer patients and their families. I've written a number of books* and published dozens of articles in medical journals and popular science magazines and have also lectured about the topic of communication between doctors and cancer patients and the "art" of delivering bad news. People often ask me where they can read about all of that. That's why I believe that it's my duty to my patients, to their families and caregivers to write this blog and to anyone who is overwhelmed by this disease or who even feels guilty that they don't know what they're supposed to do," explained the professor.

The blog will include a variety of D. Baltiņa's thoughts on oncology in general that she has written or amended over the years. An ongoing series of articles will discuss how the illness affects patients and the daily lives of their families and friends and how to best get to grips with situations that are often both confusing and frightening.

"I don't sort my thoughts. I just want to share my knowledge and experience with patients, doctors and relatives and will be happy if people find it helpful," emphasizes D. Baltiņa.

The professor is convinced that cancer isn't a final verdict, but rather a challenge to anyone who is affected by it either directly or indirectly. She remembers a time when it was taboo to speak about cancer frankly, when a diagnosis was often sugar-coated, as well as a time in the 1990s when the paradigm shifted and a diagnosis of cancer was delivered indifferently, almost as if in passing.

"I'm happy that the emotional burden of the disease and methods of coping are now widely discussed in Latvia and throughout the world," asserts Baltiņa.

The professor says that unfortunately the pathogenesis of the disease is still unclear, which is why most available therapies are directed at containing the illness and improving quality of life, while screening and early detection are still the cornerstones of successful cancer treatment. "It's important on a national level that each person is diagnosed as early as possible, which is why prevention and early detection projects are so essential. Naturally, each current cancer patient is also important, especially those in the late stages of the disease, when the possibility of successful treatment becomes less likely, yet the necessity for empathy, understanding and healing become paramount", concludes the professor.

* "Clinical Oncology", "What You Should Know About Cancer", "The Combating of Cancer in Latvia."

The 65th Anniversary of the First Specialised Cancer Hospital in Latvia", "A Half Century of Oncology in Liepāja. A Brief Look Back at Medicine in the Region Via Historical Events", "You Have Breast Cancer? Let's Talk About It."

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