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The past year has been one of challenges, growth and gratitude.

Professionally I have been challenged to learn about the many faces of cancer and its treatments and how those processes impact the nutritional well-being of the patient. I have seen in a personal way what the the research has proven; that patients are better able to manage their cancer therapies and recover more quickly if they maintain appropriate hydration and food intake. I have also seen patients respond positively to the personal attention and support they feel when given the opportunity to discuss daily eating challenges with 'their' dietitian. The perceived support is as important to the patient's healing as the actual nutrition information.

Little did I anticipate the value of my professional experience to be realized in a personal way. Shortly after I started to work in the Dorothy Schneider Cancer Center my husband was diagnosed with metastatic melanoma. Tumors were found on his adrenal gland and throughout his brain. For a year we researched treatments, visited various cancer centers, and struggled with the normal issues of uncertainty, fatigue, depression, and loss of all appetites. It was clear to me that all I had seen and done with cancer patients was a dress rehearsal for supporting my own husband in his struggle to survive. Cass passed away on July 31<sup>st</sup>; a year and a day after diagnosis.

I will never forget the care and compassion of the medical teams who helped Cass fight his cancer. I am indebted to all who picked up the slack when I didn't come to work or needed to be away from usual responsibilities. As the years unfold, memories of this one will include all of those professional and personal kindnesses.

It has been an honor to work in the Cancer Center and have a vital role in each patient's journey with cancer; one that challenges me to grow in knowledge and skills as well as gratitude.

Sarah