

Getting Older Better Wiser

Susan Knox

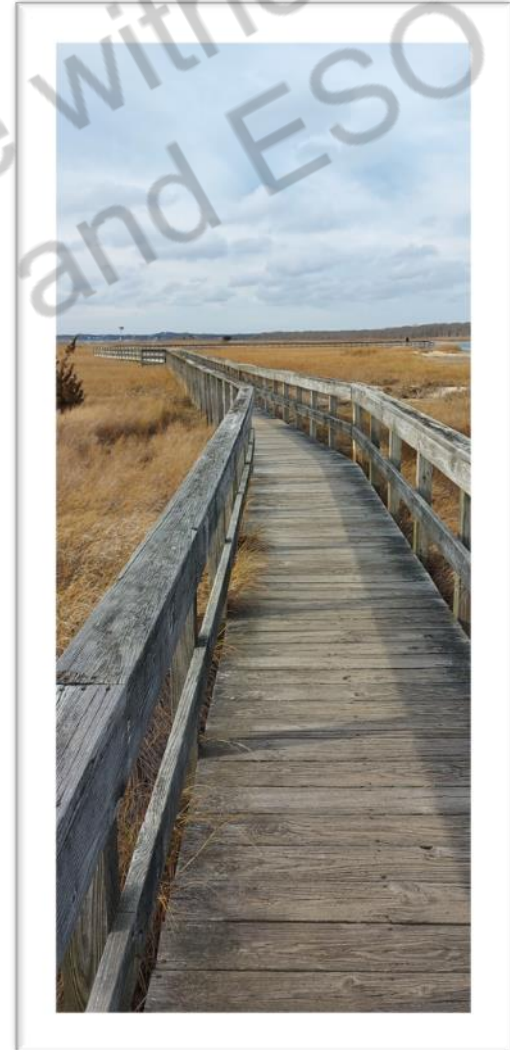
EUROPA DONNA – The European Breast Cancer Coalition

Piazza Amendola, 3 – Milan- Italy



Two roads diverged in a yellow wood
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

*from The Road Not Taken,
by Robert Frost*



Recognising the individual not the age

Some lives follow a linear pattern or some form of it proceeding in a fairly straight line throughout from School to career to family to retirement



Others- like mine are more of a zig zag with changes throughout in career and lifestyle because of what life gives us and what we want from life



BREAST CANCER AT AGE 44

From becoming a Mother to having breast cancer:

Fear, anxiety, less time to recover, financial concerns, uncertainty, less information available

Fear of leaving child to grow up without a Mother

Not knowing what the impact of disease and treatment will be



BECOMING A BREAST CANCER ADVOCATE.....

ESTABLISHING EUROPA DONNA AS EUROPE'S BREAST CANCER ADVOCACY ORGANISATION



BREAST CANCER AT 65

MORE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE DISEASE and MORE TIME FOR

Exercise

Rehabilitation

Recovery



65 AND BEYOND

Freedom and flexibility

Fewer family responsibilities

Less anxiety- children grown

Time to enjoy family



65 AND BEYOND

More time for: advocacy career
Eur Parliament, Eur Commission, EBCC, etc



19 Advocacy
Training
Courses

14 Pan European
Conferences
12 EBCC's

5 Adv. Leader
Conferences
3 MBC
Conferences
12 BHD's

2 EU
Resolutions
2 EU Written
Declarations

ECIBC

47 Member
Countries
12 Exec. Boards
10 Presidents
Independent HO 5
staff members
3 Strategic Plans

BIG
MINDACT
AURORA
OLYMPIA
HORIZON 2020
POSITIVE
EBCTCG
IBCSG

Newsletters
Websites
Training manuals
Annual Reports
Proceedings
Social Media

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

- Chronological age should not be the basis for treatment decisions
- Individual assessment/health status of each patient must be known
- Patient /doctor communication is key to making the right decision for each patient
- Decisions on treatment have to take into consideration the patient's quality of life, expectations, lifestyle
- Decisions on treatment may have to take into consideration her decision to live longer or to have a better quality of life

Background, beliefs, education, culture all play a role, possibly greater than age



PATIENTS NEED TO KNOW



Impact of treatment on quality of life

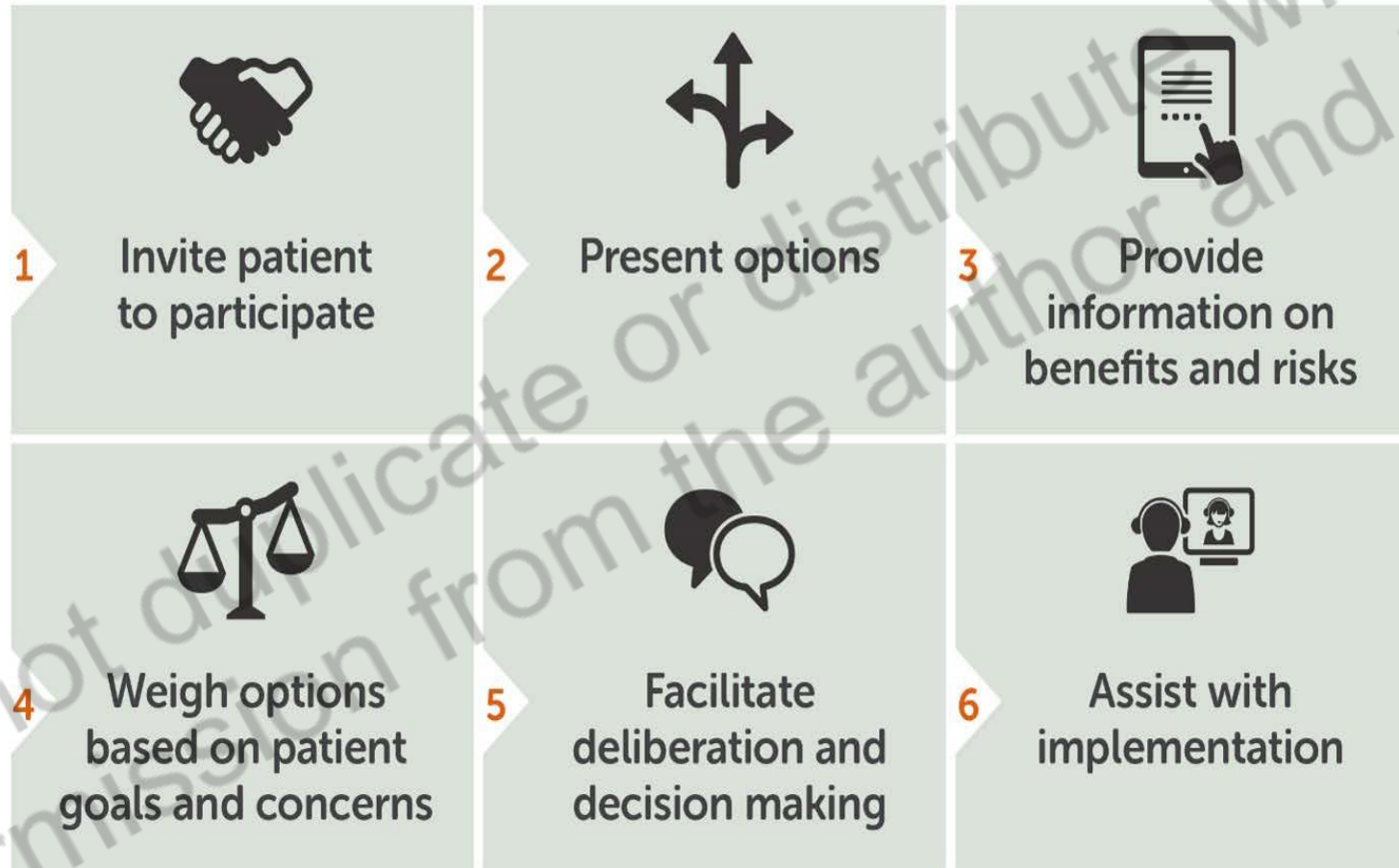
Survivorship timetable; follow up/ rehab

Description of likely side-effects

If treatment risks are different as age advances
(less tolerability, more side effects, more
complications from chemo, radiotherapy, and
surgery)



SHARED DECISION MAKING IS ESSENTIAL



PATIENT GOALS AND CLINICIAN GOALS MAY DIFFER

- To have quicker, simpler treatment (mastectomy)
- To stay in home as long as possible; remain self sufficient
- To overcome troubling side-effects
- To continue to care for family
- Manage pain and be able to sleep
- To stay in local area and not have to travel far for treatment
- To receive end of life care at hospice or receive this care at home



DOCTORS SHOULD FIND OUT

- Does she have a social network; is she active?
- Does she have a family?
- Does she have relationships or significant others to help her?
- Does she have a job?
- Does she have other significant health issues?
- Is she able to access various treatments i.e. radiotherapy?
- Is the patient prepared for hair-loss, side effects?
- Will this patient benefit from standard treatment or do the risks outweigh the benefits?



75 AND UP

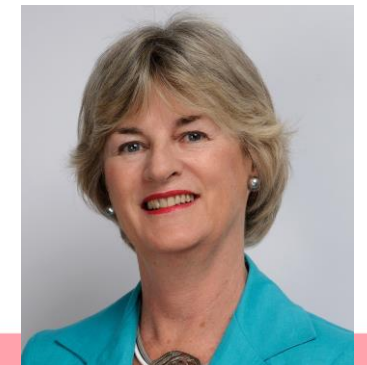


Life expectancy increasing in Europe

Better health at older ages

If 70 is the new 50, 90 may be the new 70

Patients need and deserve
treatment
based on the person,
not on age



OLDER ? YES

BETTER ? YES

WISER ? I certainly hope so.





I shall be telling this with a sigh
 Ages and ages hence
Two roads diverged in a wood and I
 I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference
 from the Road less travelled
 by Robert Frost

