



## Rob Lowe Launches Town Meetings To Help Cancer Patients And Their Loved Ones Understand Chemotherapy And its Side Effects

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SITE DEVELOPMENT COULD CREATE 600 NEW JOBS OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

### **New Survey Finds Most Patients Want To Treat Cancer Aggressively But Also Fear the Side Effects of Chemotherapy**

NEW YORK, March 3, 2003 - Rob Lowe, national spokesperson for *By My Side™: Taking Charge of Cancer Treatment™* today announced the introduction of educational Town Meetings which will roll out across the country to help cancer patients and their loved ones understand chemotherapy, its side effects and how to make informed decisions about their cancer treatment.

In a new survey of 301 cancer chemotherapy patients, 89 percent reported that they feel the best way to overcome cancer is to treat it aggressively and take control of their treatment. However, 62 percent of the patients surveyed believe that some of the side effects of chemotherapy can be as life-threatening as the cancer itself.

Created by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Cancer Care and biotechnology company Amgen, the town meetings were developed in response to the survey's finding that 71 percent of patients were so overwhelmed by their initial diagnosis of cancer that they were unable to absorb information about their cancer and its treatment.

"This is especially important given recent medical research, which has shown that treating certain cancers more aggressively can result in better survival outcomes," said Diane Blum, Executive Director of Cancer Care. "If patients are too scared of chemotherapy side effects, they may not get optimum treatment and might not give themselves the best chance of recovery."

### **ROB LOWE LAUNCHES TOWN MEETINGS TO HELP CANCER PATIENTS AND THEIR LOVED ONES UNDERSTAND CHEMOTHERAPY AND ITS SIDE EFFECTS**

Lowe will join medical oncologist Robert Livingston from the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, oncology social worker and Associate Executive Director of Cancer Care Ellen Coleman, oncology nurse Susan Leigh associated with U.S. Oncology, and a cancer survivor in a special online broadcast to launch the Town Meeting series. The broadcast, produced by HealthTalk Interactive, will be held on March 4th at 8:30 P.M. ET and will discuss the common side effects experienced by many cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, including those that can be serious or potentially life-threatening. **Patients can participate in this "online broadcast" by logging on to [www.ByMySide.com](http://www.ByMySide.com).**

The *Improving the Chemotherapy Experience™* Town Meetings are the latest resource from the ongoing *By My Side™* program, which was created to raise awareness about potentially life-threatening chemotherapy-related infection and other chemotherapy side effects.

"When my dad was diagnosed with cancer, we could have benefited from an educational program like *By My Side™*. Chemotherapy saves lives, but it also can lead to side effects like infection, anemia, nausea and vomiting, some of which may be serious or potentially life-threatening. For example, my dad developed an infection that forced him to stop his chemotherapy for a while," said Lowe. "Today, there are things you can do to help protect yourself from serious side effects like infection. Listening to physicians and other cancer patients at these Town Meetings may help give patients the information and courage to take charge of their cancer treatment."

The virtual meeting will be followed by similar live meetings in local communities around the country. These free events will be hosted by preeminent oncology experts, nurses and patients who will discuss the experience of being diagnosed with cancer, how to prepare for chemotherapy and how to manage both the emotional and physical side effects.

"Hearing a diagnosis of cancer is so shocking and overwhelming that the majority of patients are unable to clearly recall the conversation with their doctors or healthcare professionals," said Robin Kornhaber, Senior Vice President of Patient Services at The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. "This program was created to give cancer patients access to treatment information, as well as a forum for asking questions that they need answered. We want to help them get through this difficult time."

New cancer research is underway everyday and patients want to stay informed. Through the *By My Side™* Town Meetings and other information made available through various advocacy groups like The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and Cancer Care, patients can stay abreast of new developments and how they may impact treatment options.

### **About *By My Side™***

Rob Lowe joined forces with Amgen in 2002 to launch *By My Side™: Taking Charge of Cancer Treatment™* a multi-media education program to raise awareness about chemotherapy-related infections and other chemotherapy side effects.

*By My Side™* offers a wealth of free information on the side effects of chemotherapy, such as nausea, hair loss and anemia; the potentially serious risks, such as infection and emotional stress; and provides tips on treating, managing and potentially helping to prevent them. The information is available in a booklet by calling toll-free 866-By-My-Side (866-296-9743) or by accessing [www.ByMySide.com](http://www.ByMySide.com).

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In addition, patients can access the *Voices of Experience™* program, a support network for cancer patients and caregivers designed to address their overwhelming need to talk to those who have been through similar experiences.

Rob became involved in the *By My Side™* program after caring for his father Chuck, who developed a chemotherapy-related infection. The Lowe

family was unaware that infection was a serious risk associated with chemotherapy, or that having an infection would force Chuck to temporarily stop his cancer treatment, potentially jeopardizing his chances for success. Infections can also land patients in the hospital, which may expose them to additional infections and take them away from the support and love of their families and friends.

Rob Lowe is a paid spokesperson for the *By My Side™* campaign.

#### **About the Amgen Cancer Patient Survey**

Data referenced are reported from a survey commissioned by Amgen and conducted by independent research firms in 2002. The survey was conducted with a random sample of 301 cancer patients who had undergone chemotherapy within the past two years.

#### **About the *By My Side™ Improving the Chemotherapy Experience* Sponsors**

Serving people of all ages, with all types of cancer, at any stage of the disease, Cancer Care is the largest national organization solely dedicated to providing free, professional support services. Since its inception in 1944, the agency has served more than two million people. Whether in person, over the phone or via the Internet - Cancer Care offers help and hope by providing emotional support, education, financial assistance and practical help to people with cancer, their family members and friends. More information about Cancer Care can be found online at [www.cancercares.org](http://www.cancercares.org).

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society®, based in White Plains, NY, is the world's largest voluntary health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research, education and patient services. The Society's mission is to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and to improve the quality of life of patients and their families. Since its founding in 1949, the Society has provided more than \$320 million for research specifically targeting blood cancers. For additional information, please contact the Society at (800) 955-4572 or visit [www.leukemia-lymphoma.org](http://www.leukemia-lymphoma.org).

HealthTalk Interactive is a highly respected interactive health communications pioneer with in-depth programs for patients, family members, and healthcare professional available online, on the phone and at events around the country. HealthTalk's web site [HealthTalk.com \(www.healthtalk.com\)](http://www.healthtalk.com) features authoritative programs on many cancer topics as well as serious chronic conditions.

Amgen is a global biotechnology company that discovers, develops, manufactures and markets important human therapeutics based on advances in cellular and molecular biology. Amgen continues to be an innovator in cancer therapeutics and supportive care.

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#### **Editor's Notes**

- Anyone can call **866-BY-MY-SIDE (866-296-9743)** or access [www.ByMySide.com](http://www.ByMySide.com) for free information and materials or to learn more about the Town Meetings.
- An electronic version of this news release may be accessed at [www.amgen.com](http://www.amgen.com).