

New Feature at the Cancer Information Service: Cancer Expert Forum

Since 1st July 2011, advice-seekers have the possibility to pose their questions to the Cancer Information Service of the German Cancer Research Center online at the Cancer Expert Forum at www.apotheken-umschau.de. The publishing company Wort & Bild Verlag has created a new Internet layout for this forum, which was first launched in 2009. Staff members of the Cancer Information Service act as forum moderators and answer all questions placed into the forum as experts.

“Almost 80 percent of the population in Germany uses the Internet today. Many also actively participate in forums to obtain health information. This is reason enough for expanding our service accordingly,” says Dr. Ursula Will, who has been head of the email service of the Cancer Information Service for the past 10 years.

Shocked by a recent cancer diagnosis or while living with cancer later, people often have many ever changing questions. Here it is important to provide independent information that is tailored to the personal situation. “Our email users appreciate receiving individual answers to their questions and being able to read these answers over at any time,” Ursula Will reports. On the Internet, patients today find a host of information which is of varying quality and sometimes contradictory. They often they do not know what to believe and what applies to them. In these cases, the experts of the Cancer Information Service can help by providing orientation. They look back on 25 years of experience in answering questions relating to cancer. A team of doctors and other scientifically qualified staff reliably research the information and provide it in a comprehensible form. Independent, up-to-date and scientifically profound information has been the distinguishing characteristic of DKFZ's Cancer Information Service from the start.

At the health portal of Wort & Bild Verlag, www.apotheken-umschau.de, every interested person can become registered and pose their questions about cancer. These will be answered by experts of the Cancer Information Service. Unlike with the email service, the answers are available for all registered visitors so that they can read questions and answers of other people affected. Although the forum does not provide for an online exchange of experience, registered forum users can contact each other outside the Internet platform by email assisted by the forum moderators of the Cancer Information Service.

The Cancer Information Service also provides information at the nationwide toll-free number 0800 - 420 30 40, via email at krebsinformationsdienst@dkfz.de and on the Internet at www.krebsinformationsdienst.de. Supported by funds from the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the Cancer Information Service is currently being expanded to become a National Center for Cancer Information.

The publishing company Wort & Bild Verlag has been known for responsible and reliable health education for more than five decades. At its health portal at www.apotheken-umschau.de, Wort & Bild Verlag offers up-to-date news from science and research. Moreover, they issue medical guidebooks on diseases from A-Z, in which symptoms, medical examinations and treatments are explained in a comprehensible way. Its diverse program is completed by specialist articles about health matters, information services and reference books, and a drug check providing information about more than 40,000 drug products, their interactions, side effects and contraindications.

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ), employing over 2,500 staff members, is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. More than 1,000 scientists are working to investigate the mechanisms of cancer development, identify cancer risk factors and develop new strategies for better cancer prevention, more precise diagnosis and effective treatment of cancer patients. In addition, the staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) provides information about this widespread disease for patients, their families, and the general public. DKFZ is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (90%) and the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg (10%) and is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers.

Dr. Stefanie Seltmann
Head of Press and Public Relations
German Cancer Research Center
Im Neuenheimer Feld 280
D-69120 Heidelberg
T: +49 6221 42 2854
F: +49 6221 42 2968
presse@dkfz.de