

## “Medical Advice” or “Opinion” – The Important Difference By Charles (Chuck) Maack – Prostate Cancer Patient, Activist, Mentor

To protect an organization regarding any “medical” information provided, the information is often prefaced as “We do not give Medical Advice,” or, the organization instructs its members they are not to give medical advice. Yet, when we read further, the information provided does appear as “medical advice.

Absolute “Medical Advice” is expected to be only provided by those medical professionals who have studied and awarded the titles of Medical Doctor/M.D., Doctor of Medicine, or Medical Physician.

Those who have studied and earned a doctorate in philosophy, PhD, can also be addressed as “Doctor,” but it is important to recognize in this case that address is NOT a “Doctor of Medicine.” A Doctor of Philosophy identifies those who have studied to a higher level of education that qualifies them with “the theoretical basis of a particular branch of knowledge or experience.”

But now we come to “Opinion.” Important to note is that there is a distinction between “Medical Advice” and “Opinion.”

Though Medical Doctors are considered the specialists to give Medical Advice, the information they provide a patient can either be a direct result of medical expertise and knowledge, or can also only be that physician’s “opinion” based on personal experience rather than supported by medical documentation.

It is not unreasonable to expect that with deep research and study, the success of specific medications, and review of multitudes of successful treatments performed by physicians, that “opinions” can be formed by lay-persons or patients as to the reliability of that information. *What is reasonable to expect from a person or organization passing on medical information, particularly when not accompanied by reference material, is prefacing any suggestions or recommendations made to a patient or anyone else that the medical information provided IS “opinion” that should be reviewed further, then discussed with one’s treating physician.*

In my position as having chosen to be a mentor to help patients diagnosed with Prostate Cancer and their caregivers to better understand this men’s cancer based on their diagnostics, treatment already performed, and treatment planned, I recognized the importance of separating my “opinion” from “medical advice” by developing the following as my “disclaimer” so the recipient understood this important difference:

**DISCLAIMER:** Please recognize that I am not a Medical Doctor. Rather, I do consider myself a medical detective. I have been an avid student researching and studying prostate cancer as a survivor and continuing patient since 1992. I have dedicated my retirement years to continued deep research and study in order to serve as an advocate for prostate cancer awareness, and, from an activist patient's viewpoint, as a mentor to voluntarily help patients, caregivers, and others interested develop an understanding of this insidious men's disease, its treatment options, and the treatment of the side effects that often accompany treatment. There is absolutely no charge for my mentoring – I provide this free service as one who has been there and hoping to make their journey one with better understanding and knowledge than was available to me when I was diagnosed so many years ago. **IMPORTANTLY**, readers of medical information I may provide are provided this “disclaimer” to make certain they understand that the comments or recommendations I make are not intended to be the procedure to blindly follow; rather, they are to be reviewed as **MY OPINION**, then used for further personal research, study, and subsequent discussion with the medical professional/physician providing their prostate cancer care.



Charles (Chuck) Maack - Prostate Cancer

Patient/Activist/Mentor

(A mentor should be someone who offers courtesy, professionalism, respect, wisdom, knowledge, and support to help you achieve your goals; would that I succeed)

Recipient 2008 Us TOO Intl., Inc., Prostate Education & Support Network  
1<sup>st</sup> “Edward C. Kaps Hope Award”

Recipient 2012 Prostate Cancer Research Institute (PCRI) “Harry Pinchot Award”

Recipient 2016 Us TOO Intl., Inc. Certificate for 20 Years Dedication/Inspiration

Published papers:

“A Wake Up Call To Men & The Women Who Care For Them” JCPCR-06-00189

Volume 6 issue 1 - 2016: <http://tinyurl.com/3djfgve>

“A Prostate Cancer Patient’s 24-Year (1992-2016) Continuing Journey from Diagnosis to Treatment to Recurrence to Mentoring” JCPCR-04—201604 Volume 4 issue 4 – 2016: <http://tinyurl.com/hcxuxv9>

“Newly Diagnosed with Prostate Cancer? - A Mentor/Patient Discussion” May 23, 2017 Biomedical Journal of Scientific & Technical Research (BJSTR) <http://biomedres.us/pdfs/BJSTR.MS.ID.000110.pdf>

“Prostate Cancer Advocacy and Mentoring Support” – published November 22, 2017 in the journal “Holistic Approaches in Oncotherapy” HAOT-17-OPN-0004 1.1 (2017): 14-15; <https://scientiaricerca.com/srhaot/pdf/SRHAOT-01-00003.pdf>