



## Tiffany lectureship awarded

A nurse who has concentrated her research career on decreasing treatment-related morbidity in cancer patients by applying self-care theory has been awarded the Robert Tiffany lectureship.

Professor Marylin Dodd from the Department of Physiological Nursing, School of Nursing, University of California, San Francisco, US, said she was thrilled to receive the award.

She said: "When I heard the news I was thrilled and humbled as I knew Bob Tiffany and was a great admirer of his."

Marylin is internationally recognised for her work and expertise in oncology nursing care. Her research has centred on helping patients and their families using self-care.

As well as many published articles in peer-reviewed journals, she has presented more than 200 papers to professional conferences and symposia, often as the keynote speaker. She has also contributed to many books, including chapters on self-care theories and practice in two major oncology nursing texts.

As part of the development of self-care she has produced self-care publications which translate the theory into practice. The self-care intervention, called PRO-SELF, provides relevant information, self-care skills, and support to patients.

As a clinician, Marylin witnessed the difficult adjustments that cancer patients and their families experienced, prompting her to write *Managing the Side Effects of Chemotherapy and Radiation Therapy: A Guide for Patients and Their Families*. Now in its fourth edition, the book collects evidence-based information and instruc-

tions given to patients.

Another major aspect of Marilyn's work is directing the Center for Symptom Management at the University of California. The centre brings together faculty members doing research on symptoms in many different areas of study in diverse clinical populations, not just in cancer.

In 2003 Marylin was awarded the Sharon A. Lamb Endowed Chair in Nursing, an award which is named by the donor after a nurse that he thought was exceptional in her work.

Marylin first became interested in oncology care during her masters programme at the University of Washington. She took a course taught by Jeanne Benoliel on death and dying which she found very thought-provoking. She explains: "At that time I had been working as a cardiac critical care nurse. I looked at my practice through different lenses and was smitten by the

immense challenge of working with cancer patients and their families."

During her doctorate a few years later Marylin looked at how patients are changed by the devastating news that they have cancer, and how they can be helped and empowered by information about side-effects.

Looking back she is amazed by how much the care of cancer patients has changed. She said: "When I look back over 40 years of nursing there have been immense changes. In the early part of my career, cancer care was mainly an inpatient experience. But now over 90 per cent of cancer care is outpatient."

In her lecture Marylin will taking a 'long view' of her work. She said: "I will be looking at the intervention work with patients and their families and trying to make some conclusions that can only come at the end of 30 years of this work.

"I will be describing things we tried that didn't work, things that have been successful, and how our understanding of the underlying physiological mechanisms and how the body works has improved the results.

"The aggressive therapies that have come in the 1990s have improved outcomes, but patients going through the experience have almost drowned. It has been our role as nurses to keep them afloat while they are going through these difficult treatments."

*The Robert Tiffany Lecture will be given at 11am on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September in Toronto. Highlights of the lecture will be reported in a following issue of the newsletter.*



Professor Marylin Dodd