

Two tackling the trauma of cancer



Helping hands ... Caro Jonas and Jane Gillespie from the Life Force Cancer Foundation

THE psychological effect of cancer diagnosis is often overlooked. Two survivors have dedicated themselves to treating its unseen effects.

Jane Gillespie and Caro Jonas operate the Life Force Cancer Foundation which helps patients deal with emotional trauma and stress.

Breast cancer survivors themselves, the two women offer weekly meetings in Sydney.

Their work has earned them a nomination for the Pride of Australia award in the Community Spirit category, which recognises how they have improved the quality of life for those dealing with cancer.

Offering patients of all ages and stages the opportunity to share their experiences and make contact with other sufferers the two women have helped more than 1000 patients in 14 years of operation. "We fill the gap in cancer care," Ms Jonas said.

"There is no emotional support for patients when they leave the hospital. Often it's when people get the all-clear that they actually fall apart. We look after the emotional needs of cancer sufferers."

Ms Gillespie said the concept is to treat the person, not just the disease.

"It gives patients tools to go out into the world. A support group is important. It takes the away feelings of isolation," she said.

www.lifeforce.org.au

www.janegillespie.net

