Finding novel ways to increase cancer awareness and provide support to those with cancer is an ongoing challenge. Most healthcare institutions and cancer advocacy organizations continuously strive to find creative ways to accomplish both of these goals. The Mayo Clinic Cancer Center in Rochester, MN, successfully implemented a unique approach to address these goals by hosting an art exhibit and organizing supplementary activities for cancer survivors and others interested in cancer issues.

Art can elicit significant attention and emotional reactions. Throughout history, artists purposefully have used their art to raise awareness, communicate their feelings, and stimulate reactions regarding politics, religion, nature, and other complex topics. Works of art such as Salvador Dalí’s Geopoliticus Child Watching the Birth of the New Man, Leonardo da Vinci’s The Last Supper, or Norman Rockwell’s Sunset communicate powerful messages and have the ability to elicit significant emotional responses. Harnessing and directing the emotional potential of art can raise awareness about cancer and its effects and can be powerful communication and therapeutic tools.

This article outlines the use of an art exhibit, created in response to breast cancer survivor stories, and additional supplementary activities to increase cancer awareness and provide support to those with cancer.

### Key Points...

- Art can elicit profound emotional and intellectual reactions.
- The process of creating art has been used therapeutically to help patients with cancer express their thoughts and feelings, and poster art has been used to convey health messages to the public.
- Hosting an art exhibit and organizing supplementary supportive and educational activities are unique and powerful, albeit intensive, cancer awareness activities.
- Merging science and art can lay the groundwork for a variety of cancer educational opportunities.

### Literature Review

**The Therapeutic Effect of Creating Art**

The use of art as therapy has evolved from a relatively reactionary, arbitrary means of expression to an intentional and planned therapeutic endeavor. As a therapeutic intervention, for example, art has become increasingly popular in healthcare...