NEWS RELEASE

American Airlines employees take on breast cancer with Be Pink

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Maureen Smith
Customer Service Agent, PHL
American Airlines Employees Take On Breast Cancer with Be Pink Campaign

“You have cancer.”

One in two men and one in three women will hear those words during their lifetime. And one in eight people will hear the words, “You have breast cancer.”

After skin cancer, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among American women. In 2016, there are more than 2.8 million women with a history of breast cancer in the U.S. This includes women currently being treated and women who have finished treatment.

Maureen Smith, PHL-based Customer Service agent, was first diagnosed in 2002 at the age of 38. “I went through chemo and radiation, and I hoped my journey was over and I would become a survivor,” said Maureen.

According to the American Cancer Society, 5 percent of all breast cancer diagnoses in the U.S. are metastatic, also known as stage 4 or advanced cancer, which has spread beyond the breast to other organs in the body. More commonly, metastatic cancer arises months or years after the initial diagnosis and completed treatment. The chance of the cancer returning and metastasizing varies from person to person and depends greatly on the biology of the tumor and the stage at the time of original diagnosis.

With encouragement from family, friends and her American Airlines family, Maureen was able to go through chemotherapy and radiation for a second time. Four months later, the doctors were able to say those magic words: “You’re in remission.”

But much to her dismay, just two short years later, her breast cancer had metastasized to her spine and liver.

Although metastatic breast cancer is not considered curable, it can be treated. And, as treatment continues to improve, so does survival.

“I sit in a chair every Monday to receive my chemo to keep the cancer from coming back,” added Maureen. “I can happily say that I have not had a recurrence in 12 years.”

American is dedicated to turning more patients into survivors and has taken a stand in the fight to end cancer. Throughout the month of October, every $1 donated to Susan G. Komen will earn donors 20 AAdvantage miles, with a $25 donation minimum.