

## Greater Baltimore Medical Center

A "Best Hospital in America" for Cancer Care

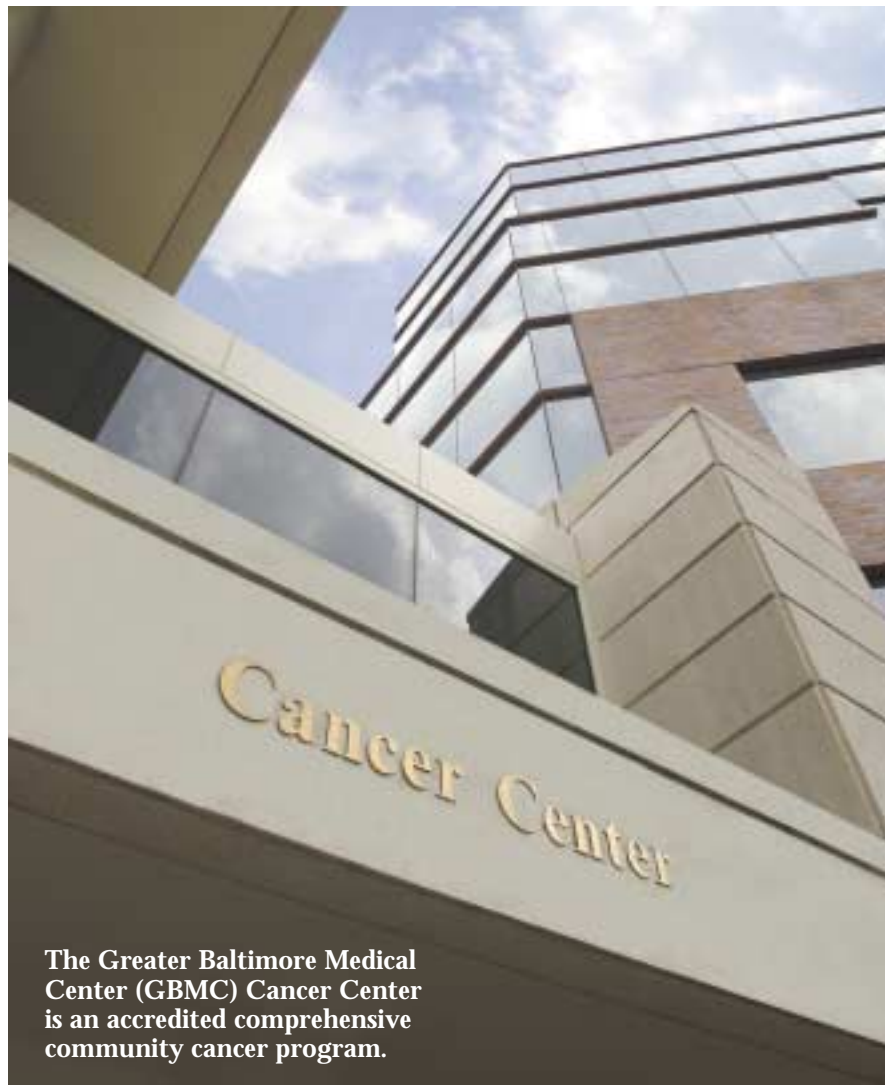
**T**he Cancer Center at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center (GBMC) in Baltimore, Md., continues to grow on many fronts—clinical staff, technological advances, research studies, and facilities.

"This growth and vitality support the promising new treatments that offer such a profound sense of optimism to the patients we treat," said Gary I. Cohen, M.D., director of the Cancer Center at GBMC.

*U.S. News & World Report* named GBMC one of America's "Best Hospitals" for cancer care in 1999 and 2001.

"Recognition aside, knowing that we are making a profound difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families continues to be our highest aspiration," Cohen said.

The cancer center provides a continuum of services ranging from an oncology care unit and radiation therapies to head and neck rehabilitation and breast care. The John M. McGovern, M.D., Oncology Support Program team provides education, counseling, and psychosocial support for cancer patients and their



The Greater Baltimore Medical Center (GBMC) Cancer Center is an accredited comprehensive community cancer program.

families. The team consists of social workers, nurses, and dedicated volunteers who help coordinate home health services, extended care placements, and hospice services, when needed.

### Comprehensive Breast Cancer Center

Breast cancer continues to be the most frequently diagnosed and treated cancer at GBMC, with 504 analytic cases in 2000 (25 percent of the total cancer cases, according to data from GBMC's cancer registry).

In December 2001, GBMC completed a construction project that

combined breast imaging and surgical consultation in a single 5,000-square-foot facility. Patients and their families enter the private, comfortable space through frosted, wave-patterned doors. The attractive waiting room accommodates both breast imaging patients and those patients waiting for a surgical consultation. Once inside the clinical areas, a patient can move easily from physician exam room to mammography, ultrasound, and biopsy without dressing or undressing multiple times. A single patient registration process is supported as well. This arrangement facilitates patient

# PROFILE

Gary Cohen,  
M.D., director  
of the cancer  
center at  
GBMC



convenience, breast imaging, and multidisciplinary discussion.

"The idea was actually straightforward," said Lauren A. Schnaper, M.D., director of the Comprehensive Breast Cancer Center. "We wanted to bring the physicians to the patients instead of having the patients seek services in multiple places."

The center offers a multidisciplinary approach to the treatment of breast cancer by offering consultations with board-certified surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists, radiologists, and plastic and reconstructive surgeons as well as a genetics counselor and psychologist. Each expert provides opinions and the team works together to develop the best possible care plan.

"Everything we need for our patients can be done or arranged for at the center," Schnaper said.

In addition, The Boutique at GBMC provides complete image consultations that include hair-styling and wigs, cosmetics and prostheses, wardrobe and jewelry, and even aromatherapy.

Patients' emotional and spiritual needs are often as important as their physical needs. "I never lose sight of this fact," said Robert B. Donegan, M.D., a hematologist/oncologist. "I am treating not just cancer but, more importantly, people with cancer." Before joining GBMC, Donegan was an Air Force physician and also participated in a Department of Defense panel that helped standardize breast cancer treatment.

## Radiation Oncology Center

Technological advances are paramount in the Department of Radiation Oncology. In 2001, the center purchased a new digital linear accelerator.

"Since we treat so many patients with breast cancer at GBMC, the addition of this second state-of-the-art linear accelerator to our depart-

## Vital Statistics

- Total hospital bed size: 308
- Dedicated cancer unit beds: 26
- Number of new analytic cancer cases seen per year: 1,926
- Managed care penetration in the state: 38 percent

ment was important from a breast cancer management standpoint," said Robert Brookland, M.D., chairman of radiation oncology.

The new accelerator also provides GBMC's radiation oncologists and therapists with a "virtual wedge," which allows modification of the treatment beam to compensate for the wide variation in breast shapes. The therapist does not have to enter the room to modify the beam. With "auto-sequencing," the therapist arranges the patient in the treatment position and exits the room, allowing the machine to automatically rotate between positions. These features have also shortened the treatment process and increased patient comfort.

The radiation oncology center offers such advanced procedures as 3-D treatment planning, conformal therapy, transperineal radioactive

seed implantation for prostate cancer, and intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT). GBMC was one of the first community hospitals in Maryland to use IMRT.

## Clinical Trials Program

At GBMC Oncology, more than 60 active protocols are available to patients for treatment, prevention, and quality of life. More than 100 patients are accrued to trial participation annually.

"Access to clinical cancer research trials for individuals living in central Maryland is both crucial to preventing, treating, and eradicating this life-threatening disease and vital to GBMC's mission to serve our community," said Cohen.

The Cancer Center at GBMC participates with

## Selected Patient Support Services

- The Milton J. Dance, Jr. Head and Neck Rehabilitation Center provides rehabilitation nursing, social work, and speech and swallowing therapies to head and neck cancer patients.
- The Hospice of Baltimore, Gilchrist Center, is a nationally acclaimed inpatient facility and a recognized regional leader providing hospice services.

national cooperative groups, including the Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group (ECOG), the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project (NSABP), the Gynecologic Oncology Group (GOG), and the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG), and numerous pharmaceutical research programs. Furthermore, the medical oncologists at GBMC are actively involved in leadership positions in ECOG as part of the Cooperative Group Outreach Program of the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins. 