

The Cancer Institute at Memorial Healthcare System

Meeting the needs of a growing community

Serving the South Broward Hospital District, Memorial Healthcare System's mission is to provide quality, patient-focused care to its patients regardless of their ability to pay and to improve the health of the community it serves.

The nonprofit, public tax-assisted healthcare system had its beginnings in 1953 with the opening of Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, Fla. In March 2005, Memorial Healthcare System will grow to a five-hospital system, including Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Fla., which opened in 1992; Memorial Hospital West in Pembroke Pines, which opened the same year; Memorial Hospital Pembroke in Pembroke Pines, which opened in 1995; and the new Memorial Hospital Miramar, which will open in March 2005.

Over the years, the cancer program has continued to evolve—ensuring patients access to high quality cancer care in their home community. The program at Memorial Regional Hospital has been recognized as a comprehensive cancer program by the American College of Surgeons since 1992. In 2001 a newly remodeled, 17,500-square-foot comprehensive cancer center opened at Memorial Hospital West, offering patients access to medical oncologists and radiation oncologists under one roof. In 2003 Memorial Regional saw 1,509 new analytic cases and Memorial West saw 874.

Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community

Located just north of Miami-Dade County, Broward County has a population of 1.7 million, making it the 15th largest county in the United States. As the population of South Broward County continues to grow



Disease-site specific multidisciplinary teams offer patients the chance to see a group of specialists all in one visit.

Vital Statistics

- Total hospital bed size: 684 at Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, Fla., and 236 at Memorial Hospital West.
- Dedicated cancer unit beds: 36 adult beds at Memorial Regional; 12-16 pediatric beds at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital; and 36 beds at Memorial Hospital West
- Number of new analytic cancer cases seen in 2003: 1,509 at Memorial Regional Hospital; 874 at Memorial Hospital West

Selected Patient Support Services

- Patient support groups including Gilda's Club; Look Good, Feel Better; and the Man-to-Man prostate cancer support program.
- At the new Breast Cancer Center, a complementary/alternative program features acupuncture, reflexology, yoga, and stress-management classes
- Wide range of community outreach programs, including health screenings and prevention education.

in pace with the rest of the county, so does the cancer program at Memorial Healthcare System. The challenges of providing coordinated, patient-centered cancer care in a four-hospital system covering a large geographic

area led to the formation of the Memorial Cancer Institute in 2004. The Memorial Cancer Institute's disease-site specific multidisciplinary teams will offer patient-centered, one-stop cancer care treatment—a

leading-edge approach that helps make it Broward's leading cancer program.

Under the leadership of medical director Atif Hussein, MD, the newly formed interdisciplinary teams will help streamline patient access to care, with a goal of providing a treatment plan to newly diagnosed patients within one week. The disease-site specific team approach means that a patient will be seen by a group of specialists in one visit—including medical oncologists, surgical oncologists, radiation oncologists, hematologists, nurse practitioners, radiation therapists, nutritionists, and other team members as needed. This multidisciplinary team will meet with each patient to discuss diagnosis, review medical history, and coordinate appropriate medical subspecialties to compose an individualized treatment plan.

Implementing a disease-site specific team approach across a multi-hospital system requires significant planning and scheduling. A series of open communications/planning meetings were held with physicians, nurses, and support staff who would be affected by this new direction. Physician champions were identified for each disease-specific program within the Cancer Institute: Sandra Franco, MD, and Alejandra Perez, MD, lead the breast cancer team, the first program to be launched; followed by colorectal/GI led by Roberto Cano, MD, and Gabriel Domenech, MD; and then hematology with Lyle Feinstein, MD, and Daren Grosman, MD, PhD.

While the breast cancer program has been underway since 1995, in November 2004, the team is scheduled to move into the new 6,800-square-foot freestanding Breast Cancer Center on the campus of Memorial Regional Hospital.

In a contemporary setting designed to be warm and inviting to women, the \$1.5 million state-of-the-art facility will house six exam

rooms, four physician offices, an onsite pharmacy, and 12 infusion suites that allow either complete privacy or the option of accommodating guests. The medical team at the Breast Cancer Center will have access to the latest diagnostic options through the comprehensive breast imaging program. The Breast Imaging Center offers screening mammography at all four healthcare system hospitals and diagnostic mammography in two locations. All of the healthcare system's mammograms are read by dedicated breast radiologists and then by R2 ImageCheckers®, which digitally analyze the image, marking areas that may require closer inspection.

A newly hired nurse practitioner will help coordinate patient flow through the Breast Cancer Center, assisting physicians in meeting every patient need. After consultation with the multidisciplinary medical team, breast cancer patients can choose to receive their care from the Memorial Cancer Institute at three locations—the Breast Cancer Center, Memorial Regional Hospital, or Memorial Hospital West.

A clinical research department, headed by Cynthia Frankel, RN, OCN®, will be located in the Breast Cancer Center. "Our goal is to have an open clinical trial for every stage of breast cancer," said Jeff Esham, Memorial Cancer Institute's administrative director. The breast cancer program will also offer genetic counseling and a complementary/alternative program that will include acupuncture, reflexology, yoga, and stress-management classes.

State-of-the-Art Technology

The Radiation Oncology department at Memorial Cancer Institute uses the latest technology in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. The program offers IMRT, high dose rate (HDR) brachytherapy, radiofrequency ablation, stereotactic radiosurgery, microsphere therapy for metastases to the liver, and 3-D treatment planning.

The Memorial Cancer Institute boasts a strong clinical research program, accruing 8 percent of patients to clinical trials annually. Currently, the program participates in 48 clinical trials, including participation in

CCOP and the Children's Oncology Group (COG). Each of the disease-specific programs under development will be based on the latest clinical research, providing patients with the opportunity to be part of the present standard of care or to participate in clinical trials.

Continuity of Care

Memorial Cancer Institute understands that patient care does not end when patients leave the hospital grounds. "These patients do not finish when they step out the door of our center. They have their caregivers and family, and we all need to be on the same page," said Dr. Hussein. The cancer program reaches out to work with a variety of patient support groups in the community, partnering with Gilda's Club, offering the Look Good, Feel Better program, the Man-to-Man prostate cancer support program, the Cancer Recovery program, the Volunteer Ambassador Program, and more. For the past three years, in December the hospital has hosted a fashion show for cancer survivors and their families. Last year more than 300 people attended the gala event, which featured music, a master of ceremonies, and fashions provided by local retailers.

Community outreach is an integral part of the cancer program at Memorial Health. A community relations department helps the cancer program connect with local residents to provide prevention education and screenings at health fairs and other community events, and to provide ongoing support to primary care physicians in the community. The cancer program's mobile mammography van goes out into community areas providing free screenings to women who are uninsured and underserved. Between April 2003 and March 2004, the mobile mammography van performed 398 free screenings. In addition, there were 56 diagnostic mammograms, 66 breast ultrasounds, and 19 breast biopsies provided in the same period of time. Memorial Healthcare System also has an adult mobile health clinic that provides primary care to the underserved population in the area.

"We are very active in the community because we belong to the community," said Esham. ☐