

The Thomas Johns Cancer Center in Richmond, Va.

Committed to compassionate, exceptional patient care

This year, the Thomas Johns Cancer Center at CJW Medical Center celebrates more than 21 years of fighting cancer and caring for the health and well-being of cancer patients throughout central Virginia. Named for its founder, Thomas N. P. Johns, MD, a distinguished surgeon, former president of the hospital, and cancer patient, the Thomas Johns Cancer Center is located on the Johnston-Willis Campus in Richmond, Va. The cancer center is part of the CJW Medical Center, which is part of the HCA network.

Each year the Thomas Johns Cancer Center cares for approximately 1,600 patients. The cancer program's dedicated, highly skilled staff provides patients with the latest oncology services including education, research programs, genetic screenings and counseling, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care. The cancer center also offers patients and their families and caregivers access to a series of complimentary support programs.

At the Thomas Johns Cancer Center the focus is on enhancing the patient experience during a very trying time. The new outpatient infusion center was planned with the patient's needs for ease of access, streamlined services, and convenience in mind. Located adjacent to one of the hospital's main entrances, the cancer center's new outpatient infusion center offers valet parking. Patients now have the convenience of on-site registration and an on-site, infu-



The Survivors' Reflection Garden at the Thomas Johns Cancer Center is located on the Johnston-Willis Campus of the CJW Medical Center.

Vital Statistics

- Total hospital bed size: 758 (292 on Johnston-Willis Campus; 466 on Chippenham Campus)
- Number of dedicated cancer unit beds: 29
- Number of new analytic cases seen per year: more than 1,600

Selected Patient Support Services

- The Hawthorne Cancer Resource Center, providing the area's largest number of support groups and services free of charge
- Survivors' Reflection Garden, a tranquil sanctuary for patients and families
- Annual "Say it in a Song" songwriting workshop
- "Lunch with the Docs" community education and lecture series

sion-specific pharmacy and laboratory service.

"We are always moving toward the cutting edge of what is needed for community cancer care," said Lawrence Lewkow, MD, medical director of oncology. Dr. Lewkow notes that the program has received certification from the American College of Surgeons (ACS) for the past 10 years. Oncology nurses at the cancer center are encouraged to achieve certification as Oncology Certified Nurses (OCNs) and

Advanced Oncology Certified Nurses (AOCN). All nurses within the inpatient oncology unit are chemotherapy certified.

A Multimodal Approach to Patient Care

The Thomas Johns Cancer Center supports a multimodal approach to cancer treatment and clinical excellence by holding weekly tumor boards, including site-specific conferences for breast, brain, and thoracic oncological cases, as well

as a general cancer conference. This multidisciplinary approach includes the involvement of surgeons, radiation oncologists, medical oncologists, and clinical staff.

The Thomas Johns Cancer Center also offers a genetic screening and education program staffed by two genetics educators, with specialized training for genetic screening of breast, colorectal, ovarian, and endometrial cancers.

Advanced Treatment Options

In 2004 the Neuroscience and GammaKnife® Center opened on the Johnston-Willis Campus. It is now one of only two facilities in Virginia to provide this innovative treatment option for patients with a variety of benign and malignant intracranial conditions. To date, the program has treated more than 200 patients with this sophisticated technology. In this program, radiation oncologists work hand-in-hand with the neurosurgeons to care for this patient population.

The Thomas Johns Radiation Oncology Center delivered more than 14,000 treatments in 2004. “We’re proud of the role that we play in the community as an advocate for cancer patients as well as participating in their care,” said Thomas Eichler, MD, medical director of radiation oncology. In addition to offering stereotactic radiosurgery with the GammaKnife, the program offers IMRT, prostate brachytherapy, sentinel node biopsy, and access to a variety of clinical trials through the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG). CT, MRI, and PET scanning are all available to assist with staging.

While busy, the radiation department always takes the time to honor a special tradition at the conclusion of a patient’s radiation therapy. Mounted on a plaque in the department’s waiting area is a shiny brass bell. Patients are invited to mark the end of their course of radiation therapy by ringing this brass bell

three times to commemorate and affirm their personal success, hope, and life. “Ringing the bell is a special celebration that both patients and staff anticipate with great hope,” said Dr. Eichler.

Serving the Wider Community

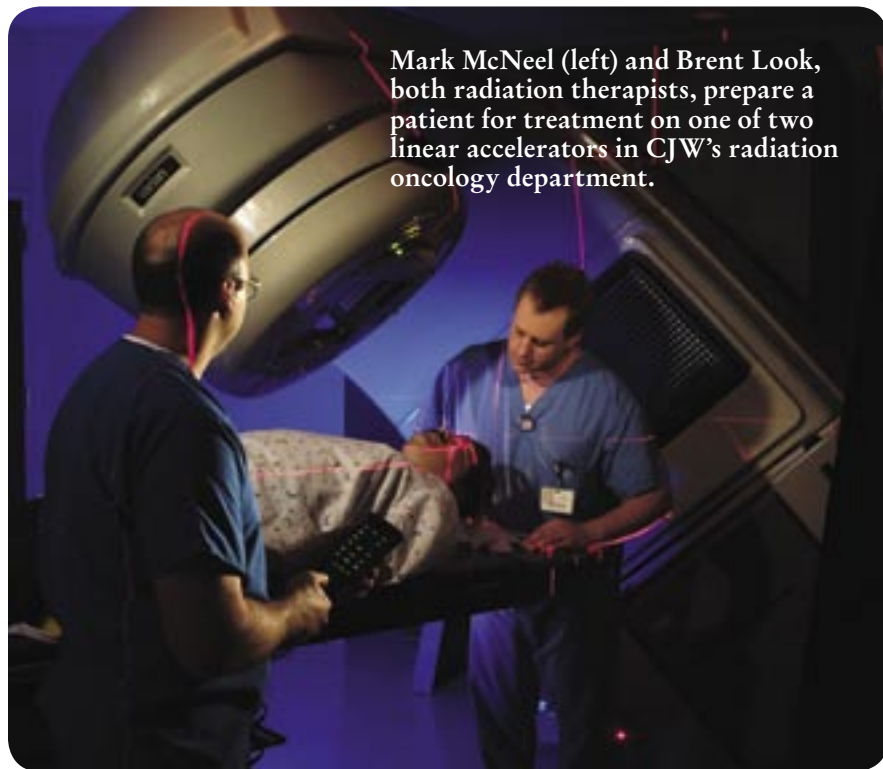
The Thomas Johns Cancer Center serves the greater Richmond area by providing space for the Hawthorne Cancer Resource Center. Founded by Robin Yoder, MSW, a CJW Medical Center employee and recent recipient of the American Cancer Society’s Lane W. Adams Quality of Life Award, The Hawthorne is housed on the Johnson-Willis Campus and provides the largest number of ongoing cancer support groups in the Richmond area. The Hawthorne’s cheerful, warm, and inviting environment includes a brightly colored mural, overstuffed furniture, and a lively tropical fish tank. The facility offers an extensive library of cancer education materials, computers for online research, a hair salon with wig and hair maintenance services to help patients manage hair loss, and a meeting room for group gatherings.

The Hawthorne is not only home to a variety of cancer

survivors’ support groups; it also hosts yoga classes, a book club, scrapbooking, journaling, and a knitting club. A 501(C) non-profit organization, The Hawthorne offers its services free of charge to cancer patients and their families from all over central Virginia.

Through Yoder’s efforts, the program sponsors a one-of-a-kind, “Say It in a Song” songwriting workshop to benefit The Hawthorne. Nashville recording artist, singer-songwriter Tricia Walker spends two days leading this workshop followed by a Sunday afternoon concert to premier the songs written by the workshop participants. For the past four years, the songwriters have included adults and children with cancer, patients’ family members and friends, and cancer program caregivers who treat these patients everyday. Thomas Johns Cancer Center nurses, chaplains, radiation therapists, social workers, and physicians all pitch in and compose songs, most of which are dedicated to their patients.

In this twenty-first year, the Thomas Johns Cancer Center continues the fight against cancer by providing the community with cutting-edge technology, compassionate care, and a network of support and hope. ☪



Mark McNeel (left) and Brent Look, both radiation therapists, prepare a patient for treatment on one of two linear accelerators in CJW’s radiation oncology department.