

The C. R. Wood Cancer Center at Glens Falls Hospital in Glens Falls, New York

Caring for patients and families with exceptional support services

Located at the gateway to the stately Adirondack Mountains, the C. R. Wood Cancer Center at Glens Falls Hospital in Glens Falls, N.Y., serves residents of northeastern New York state and Vermont. The program is accredited by the American College of Surgeons as a Community Hospital Comprehensive Cancer Program.

From the beginning, this community-based cancer center has been committed to ensuring that patients and their families have access to quality support services from diagnosis throughout the continuum of care. For more than a decade, the cancer center has been providing an exceptional range of supportive care services. While a recent Institute of Medicine (IOM) report focused national attention on the need for supportive care for cancer patients, here in northeastern New York, the C.R. Wood Cancer Center has had these services “hardwired into our program for years,” said Pat Spencer-Cisek, MS, APRN-BC, AOCN, executive director of oncology services at Glens Falls Hospital. “The fact that we’ve been providing these services for all these years is one of the things we are proudest of.”

A Legacy of Healing

The hospital-based cancer center is located in the Pruyn Pavilion at the Glens Falls Hospital. Originally opened in 1993, the cancer center has experienced increasing patient visit volumes. To better serve patients and families, the center recently underwent renovation and celebrated a grand “re-opening” in September 2007. Renovations to the first floor included the addition of healing design features to the waiting area that help foster a calm, tranquil environment. The space is designed with new comfortable seating, wall coverings in warm colors, serene photographs, and a soothing water feature. The first





Among the support programs available is an annual men’s retreat for cancer survivors held in the scenic Adirondacks (pictured above).

Pictured (above) are survivor Pat Walsh (on left) with Vickie Yattaw, RN, OCN, oncology resource nurse, enjoying the festivities at the Annual Breast Cancer Survivors Luncheon.

Vital Statistics

- Total hospital bed size: 410
- Number of dedicated oncology inpatient beds: 25 of which 90 percent are private rooms.
- Number of new analytic cases seen in 2007: 880

Selected Support Services:

- Disease-site specific support groups
- LeBed® Focus on Health Method and Tai Chi classes
- Quarterly cancer center newsletter
- Nutrition Services
- Pastoral Care

floor now includes “Cindy’s Healing Place,” dedicated space where integrative services such as massage, Reiki, and acupuncture may be offered. Alternatively, these rooms may be used for educational support programs or quiet relaxation. The renovation project was supported through Cindy’s Retreat Fund, a fund created in honor of Lucinda (Cindy) Ginsberg, a former cancer center patient who passed away in 2004. Cindy’s Retreat Fund

is just one aspect of Cindy Ginsberg’s remarkable legacy which continues to inspire expanded supportive care offerings for patients and their families, extending this cancer program’s support services far beyond the bricks and mortar facility.

Conveniently Centralized Services

The Cancer Center’s medical oncology, radiation oncology, and support-

ive care services are centralized in the Pruyne Pavilion. On the first floor are the radiation oncology department and services. Also located here are the cancer center's outpatient infusion center and dedicated oncology pharmacy and the lab. The oncology pharmacy, which is staffed by a dedicated, board-certified oncology pharmacist, handles all chemotherapy for the hospital—both inpatient and outpatient. The first floor is also home to Uniquely You®, the program's on-site salon and boutique; the Cancer Center Library with medical, coping, and survivorship information available in book, online, audiotape, and videotape formats; and offices for all of the program's psychosocial support services.

On the second floor are the medical oncology/hematology physician offices and the program's clinical research office. The second floor also houses a cancer service program, which provides free breast, cervical, and colon cancer screening through New York State Department of Health grants.

At the cancer center, medical oncology services are provided by a team of medical oncologists, physician assistants, oncology-certified registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, pharmacists, and laboratory and support staff. All of the cancer center's outpatient treatment nurses are OCNs.

Radiation oncology services are provided by board-certified radiation oncologists, physicists, radiation therapists, and nurses. With two linear accelerators, a CT/simulator, a number of treatment planning systems, and access to a PET/CT scanner, the program offers intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) for most cancers and also offers image-guided radiation therapy (IGRT). Since 2006, the program has offered high dose rate (HDR) brachytherapy for endometrial, cervical, and breast cancer.

The program sees between 900 to 1,000 new cases annually. Leading cancer sites treated include breast, lung, colon, and prostate. In addition

to weekly tumor boards, the cancer center hosts a bi-weekly lung-specific tumor board and a lymphoma-specific tumor board that includes teleconferencing with the University of Vermont. The program's Cancer Committee also has multidisciplinary committees for breast and colon cancer and for palliative care.

For more than 10 years, the Breast Center at the C.R. Wood Cancer Center has provided patient navigation services to help guide patients through the continuum of care. Two full-time oncology nurses provide navigation assistance to any patient who has diagnostic or interventional procedures through the Breast Center. In 2007 the Breast Center opened its digital mammography suite and offers screening digital mammography with computer-aided detection (CAD).

Because the cancer center serves patients throughout the Adirondacks and northeastern New York, many have to travel some distance for care. The program's mobile mammography service travels throughout the region to bring these services out into the community. The Cancer Center also collaborates with the hospital's family health centers and the region's rural health network to meet the needs of patients throughout their service area.

Exceptional Supportive Care

At the C. R. Wood Cancer Center, oncology education and support services are woven into the comprehensive care provided for patients and their families. Psychosocial oncology care staff includes licensed psychologist, Gerry Florio, PhD, and licensed social worker, Karen Cook, LMSW. These healthcare professionals provide individual, couple, family, and group counseling and facilitate an array of supportive care programs—from retreats to annual survivorship luncheons. Two dedicated oncology resource nurses, Paul Miller, RN, OCN, and Vickie Yattaw, RN, OCN, are available to patients and families for education and support throughout the cancer care journey. Patients also have access to other interdisciplinary team members with expertise in oncology care including a case manager, rehabilitation specialists, an oncology nutritionist, and pastoral care.

Cindy's Comfort Camp, is just

one example of how the cancer program connects with the community to provide exceptional supportive services. Offered in collaboration with the local American Cancer Society, this unique camp is available for children and teens (ages 6-17) with a family member who has cancer. Campers can participate in healing circles, a ropes course, a talent show, and more. "One of the critical elements is having one-on-one volunteers present for all the kids who attend camp," said camp organizer Gerry Florio, PhD. "All the people who provide that support are community volunteers. They are people who keep coming back to do this for our families."

Cindy's Retreat Fund has helped inspire and create an array of special supportive programs including a woman's retreat, a men's retreat, as well as Cindy's Comfort Camp.

Started in memory of Cindy Ginsberg, the fund was first used to develop Cindy's Retreat, a program for women living with and beyond cancer that Ginsberg helped establish. Now a semi-annual event, Cindy's Retreat provides a healing environment in which women can share their experiences and participate in a range of activities—from relaxation exercises, Reiki, and chair massage to kayaking and walking—all in a beautiful lakeside setting. Cindy's Retreat is open to any woman who has been touched personally by cancer.

Today Cindy's Retreat Fund also helps to provide funds for Cindy's Comfort Camp and a men's retreat program. "She planted the seed, and we continue to make things grow," said Karen Cook.

The cancer program's support services also incorporate survivorship activities. "Steps Toward Wellness," an educational program for patients who have completed treatment is facilitated by social worker Karen Cook. This year marks the cancer center's 16th annual breast cancer survivor's luncheon, which is attended by more than 200 survivors each year. For more than 10 years, the program has also hosted a yearly men's prostate cancer survivor's dinner.

Building on more than a decade's experience in providing quality cancer care integrated with exceptional support services, the C.R. Wood Cancer Center is committed to caring for the whole patient. ■