

## The Morrison Cancer Center at Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital

Close-to-home care in a healing environment

Newly constructed in 2005, the Morrison Cancer Center at Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital serves residents of Hastings, a south central Nebraska community with a population of about 25,000. The cancer center is also a regional referral center drawing patients from more than 11 nearby counties as well as some areas of northern Kansas. Both medical oncology and radiation oncology services are provided in the 13,000-square-foot, one-story facility. Approved by the American College of Surgeons since 1982, the cancer program sees more than 400 new cases annually, with 11,000 patient visits in 2007. Leading cancer sites treated are breast, lung, and colorectal.

The cancer center's east wing houses medical oncology services, which are provided by Nebraska Cancer Care, LLC, a private practice with a staff of three board-certified medical oncologists/hematologists and five oncology nurses. Within this area are eight chemotherapy stations and two private treatment rooms.

Hospital-based radiation oncology services are located in the center's west wing. The program has one board-certified radiation oncologist who along with advanced radiation technical professionals provides

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### Vital Statistics

- Total hospital bed size: licensed for 183 beds
- Dedicated inpatient cancer unit beds: 10
- Number of new analytic cases seen in 2007: 400

### Selected Support Services

- Monthly support groups
- Home Away from Home hospitality house
- Social work services
- Wraps, Caps and More program

*Top,* A wall of windows provides views of the four-season Healing Garden at the Morrison Cancer Center.

*Bottom,* The corridor leading to the linear accelerator treatment area features beautiful, backlit photographs of the local landscape. This art display is made possible by the donor-supported *Images of Hope* program.

*Above,* For patients and their family members, the hospital's Home Away From Home hospitality house provides lodging at low or no cost.

treatment with the program's 21 MEV linear accelerator, which is equipped with a 120 multi-leaf collimator.

Since 2005, the program has offered intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) for head and neck cancer, prostate cancer, and some cervical cancers. IMRT is also provided for re-treatment and for palliative treatment. Other state-of-the-art radiation treatment options include high-dose rate (HDR) radiation therapy and MammoSite® for breast cancer.

### Launching a Thoracic Multidisciplinary Clinic

In December 2007 the Morrison Cancer Center initiated an innovative Lung Cancer Clinic, bringing multidisciplinary, disease-site specific care to patients in the community. The clinic offers initial evaluations and second opinions.

At the monthly clinic, patients can be evaluated in one visit by a multidisciplinary team that includes a radiation oncologist, a pulmonologist who is also trained in interventional bronchology, and the state's only dedicated thoracic surgeon, who travels from the University of Nebraska Medical Center to participate in the program.

Interventional pulmonologist Francisco Almeida, MD, FCCP, championed the creation of the Lung Cancer Clinic and serves as its director. Two nurses—one from the pulmonary clinic and one from radiation oncology—coordinate the scheduling for the monthly clinic.

This multidisciplinary approach brings numerous patient benefits, said medical oncologist/hematologist Debora Bruno, MD. "The patient will get the benefit from all the possible disciplines involved in his or her care. It is done in such a way that nothing would fall through the cracks. The [treatment] plan is basically structured and discussed at the time the patient is here, so maximal benefit is provided by all the disciplines involved in the patient's care." Another patient benefit is the



The waiting area's wall coverings and furnishings feature soothing earth tones to help create a comforting ambience.



With a view of the Healing Garden, the Meditation Room provides quiet space for reflection.

potential to shorten the length of treatment. "Instead of making several appointments and going from one place to another...[the patient] is seen in the same day by all the specialists who are going to be directly treating him or her within the near future," Bruno said. "We can coordinate care in a faster, more efficient manner."

### Patient-focused Care

The cancer center's commitment to providing care in a patient-centered, healing environment is reflected throughout the facility. Interior design features enhance the patient experience by creating a calming, reassuring treatment environment. The building's architectural design, furnishings, and environmental details support the program's goal of providing care in a therapeutic, patient-centric setting. Natural lighting and interior design elements, such as wall coverings and furnishings in soothing earth tones, create a warm, non-clinical atmosphere. Interior water features are not only aesthetically pleasing, but also help to create a soothing auditory ambience. From the infusion treatment area, a wall of large windows provides views of the program's beautiful four-season Healing Garden, which features a tranquil waterfall.

Within the radiation oncology wing, a creative display of artwork helps soften the high-tech environment. The donor-supported *Images for Hope* program provides funding for a unique art display. Large, translucent, backlit shadow boxes greet patients as they walk along the corridor toward the linear accelerator treatment area. The display, which

is changed periodically, provides a comforting array of striking local landscapes, captured by an acclaimed Nebraska photographer, and creates a calming, restorative environment for both patients and staff.

Additional amenities provided for cancer center patients and their families include wireless Internet access, touch screen computers for educational use, LCD TV/DVD and headphones for relaxation, and laptop computers. Within the facility are a dedicated conference room and a Meditation Room that provides a quiet, private space with views of the Healing Garden.

Among the complimentary resources available to patients are monthly support groups, information on community services, and the *Wraps, Caps and More* program, which provides free headwear for cancer center patients.

At many community cancer centers, transportation to treatment is an issue for patients. Because the Morrison Cancer Center is located in a semi-rural area, many patients have to travel a considerable distance to receive care. One way the program is able to help is through the hospital's Home Away from Home hospitality house, which offers low-cost lodging for patients and their families. For those in need, the program is often able to provide this option free of charge.

Committed to providing quality, patient-focused care, the Morrison Cancer Center is realizing its mission of bringing hope and healing to the community it serves by offering state-of-the-art treatment options and innovative programs to patients in a healing, therapeutic care environment. ☐