

# spotlight

## The Comprehensive Cancer Center at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center Consolidating cutting-edge care



**T**he Comprehensive Cancer Center at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, part of the Wake Forest Baptist Health system, has held continuous NCI-designation since 1974, and this designation was recently renewed for another five-year period through 2017. Additionally, the cancer center holds accreditations from NAPBC, the American College of Radiology (ACR), and ACoS. Located in Winston-Salem, N.C., the Comprehensive Cancer Center serves as the primary tertiary referral center for patients in a geographic region encompassing nearly nine million people.

### Consolidating Care

A significant commitment to streamlining care and services is the \$125 million expansion of the cancer center. This expansion will create 280,000 square feet of new space and bring all inpatient and outpatient cancer services under one roof. Part of the expansion planning process involved administrators, faculty, physicians, and management. Once the North Carolina Certificate of Need process was successfully completed, the plan for consolidating services was underway.

The construction, scheduled for completion in late 2013, will add four inpatient floors and a day hospital floor to the existing four-story outpatient cancer center; plus a conference center floor and an administrative floor. The new building will total 530,600 square feet when completed, accommodating current and projected cancer-related inpatient volumes (the number of inpatient beds will increase from 113 to 148 acute care

and 44 observation beds, day hospital, observation, and infusion beds). The expansion will include a dedicated oncology intensive care unit, and will free up space on the main campus for other services.

Outpatient services include:

- Radiation Oncology, including Gamma Knife Center
- Hematology and Oncology Clinics
- Thoracic Oncology Program
- Clinical Research Management Program
- Outpatient Radiology
- Breast Care Center
- Multispecialty and Surgical Oncology clinics.

As the opening approaches, the cancer center is seeking patient input on furniture design, artwork, and the gardens.

### Cutting-Edge Multidisciplinary Treatment

The cancer center provides care with the latest technology, treatments, and research, including cytoreductive surgery and hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy (HIPEC) for malignancies that have spread throughout the peritoneal cavity. The cancer center performs about 100 cases annually. The HIPEC program continues to draw patients from around the country and is linked to a variety of research initiatives, including the largest quality of life study for HIPEC patients worldwide.

Wake Forest has been performing Gamma Knife radiosurgery since 1999 and has one of the most active Gamma Knife centers in the U.S. The current Leksell Gamma Knife® Perfexion™ machine is the

most accurate and advanced radiosurgery technology available.

Wake Forest also offers breast tomosynthesis, a highly accurate diagnostic tool recently approved by the FDA. This technology converts digital breast images into a stack of thin slices that are used to create a 3D mammogram. Used in conjunction with 2D mammography, 3D mammography improves visibility by reducing tissue superimposition that can hide or mimic pathology in 2D mammography.

Hematology and Oncology provides services on four inpatient units and a BMT unit, as well as one onsite outpatient unit that includes a 35 chair and bed infusion area at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.

The infusion pharmacy serves more than 150 patients per day. A staff of three pharmacists and three pharmacy technicians provide distribution expertise in the infusion area. Recently, the infusion pharmacy was renovated to include a state-of-the-art clean room that is home to an Apoteca machine, one of two operational chemotherapy-mixing robots in the nation.

Surgical Oncology is extensively involved in multimodality consultations for the care of patients with melanoma, sarcoma, endocrine tumors, and diseases of the breast, as well as the full spectrum of gastrointestinal malignancy. The clinical service includes seven fellowship-trained surgical oncologists, surgical oncology fellows, four surgical house officers, two to three medical students, three advanced practitioners, and three nurses. Surgical Oncology provides



Number of analytic cases in 2011: 3,673  
Select Support Services:

- Counseling and Social Work
- Support Meetings
- Nutrition Services
- Therapeutic Programs
- Integrative Medicine
- Resources Centers
- Activities and Education
- Financial Services
- Palliative Care
- Pastoral Care

services on one inpatient unit and one onsite outpatient unit.

Outpatient radiology at the cancer center performs diagnostic X-ray, CT, ultrasound, and mammography services. Accredited by the ACR as a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence, outpatient radiology also performs mammographic interventional procedures, such as stereotactic biopsies and needle localization. MRI services will be provided in the cancer center beginning in July of 2013.

Interventional Radiology offers a full complement of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures such as advanced loco-regional liver directed therapies, including transcatheter arterial chemoembolization (TACE), Yttrium-90 radioembolization, radiofrequency ablation (RFA), and portal vein embolization.

The cancer center also has a unique integration of psychosocial support and counseling services. Such an integrative model allows for interdisciplinary collaboration and the delivery of mental health services in conjunction with medical care.

In 2012 the cancer center enrolled more than 1,200 patients from the region to clinical trials, including Phase I, II, and III cooperative group, investigator-initiated, and industry-sponsored trials. The cancer center accrues approximately 30 percent of patients to clinical trials annually.

### Unique Support Services

Wake Forest currently provides navigation and coordination services in Breast Health, Thoracic Oncology, Pediatric Oncology, GI Oncology, Melanoma/Immunotherapy, and NeuroOncology. The navigation programs function as a concierge-type service, with navigators serving as a touch-point for patients from

their initial diagnosis all the way through survivorship.

According to Kerry Snyder Husted RT, RTT, MBA, administrative director, Cancer Center of Excellence & Oncology Service Line, the role of the navigator spans, “from social work to psychosocial work, to counseling, nutrition, patient advocacy, clinician connections; basically everything from A to Z that a patient would need or want, and then that transitions into survivorship.”

For breast cancer patients, the cancer center sends out a patient satisfaction survey specific to those patients. This is in addition to the satisfaction survey sent out by the medical center. The navigation program continually scores above 98 percent in satisfaction by patients.

Survivorship services include an orientation hour using a patient self-assessment with a survivorship worksheet and distress thermometer and Seasons of Survival (SOS) educational group meetings.

A unique music therapy program offered by the cancer center is the Healing Harps program. What began a few years ago as one harpist playing in inpatient area hallways and the outpatient clinic has expanded into a full-blown therapeutic program. The cancer center is now a national site for the training and certification of therapeutic harpists. The therapeutic harp practitioner and other harpists play soothing music in the outpatient clinic on various days of the week. This service helps settle patients and family members waiting for appointments. Patients can also request one-on-one time with the harpist.

Other support services include valet parking for patients, an appearance boutique with wig fittings and prostheses, and Healing Touch therapy. Nurses can

complete an education and certification process for Healing Touch to be able to provide it for any patient.

Patients and family members can also take advantage of the cancer center’s alternative to waiting rooms. “Hospitality rooms” are available in the outpatient cancer center; one on the first floor in the Radiation Therapy Department and the other on the third floor in the Hematology and Oncology Clinic. These rooms function as an informal meeting space where people can go in and talk to other families and patients. Snacks, coffee, and trained volunteers are always on hand.

“Patients and especially families do like to linger in there as it gives them a very therapeutic location to be able to share information with each other,” said Marcy Poletti, RN, MSN, program administrator for Wake Forest Baptist Health. She noted that these rooms end up as little personal support groups without the formality of an established support group.

### Outreach & Affiliation

The Cancer Prevention and Control Program has close to 40 funded cancer control projects with more than \$10 million on breast, prostate, and colon cancer currently under way. These projects focus on molecular epidemiology and genetics, cancer prevention, rural and minority health, tobacco control, survivorship, and access to care.

The cancer center actively partners with the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity at Wake Forest School of Medicine. The Angelou Center works to address health disparities across the region and the nation. 