

spotlight

Georgetown Cancer Center Georgetown, Kentucky



In 2009 Georgetown Community Hospital partnered with nearby University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center to establish a cancer program that serves Scott County and neighboring areas of the Bluegrass State, providing close-to-home cancer care to a larger population. In August of this year, Georgetown Cancer Center became a Commission on Cancer-accredited program, expanding its outreach and screening services further into the community.

The cancer center, which is conveniently situated inside the 75-bed hospital, offers medical oncology services, including chemotherapy and infusion services (six treatment chairs and one treatment room), as well as pharmacy, rehabilitation, and laboratory services. Currently, the cancer center is staffed by one medical oncologist, five nurses, three PRN (per diem) nurses, and a full-time nurse navigator.

Not only is the cancer center's location on the Georgetown Community Hospital campus convenient for patients, it allows

cancer center staff to coordinate directly with the hospital for additional services or referrals. "We make sure the transition is pretty seamless. We're located in the same place, so conversations are encouraged between inpatient and outpatient staff," said Dianna Kouns, RN, BSN, community outreach coordinator at Georgetown Cancer Center. All cancer patients have access to psychosocial services with a social worker, nutrition services with a registered dietitian, financial counseling, and a rehabilitation services team at Georgetown Community Hospital.

As part of the affiliate network of the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center, located only 12 miles away in Lexington, Georgetown Cancer Center can refer patients for clinical trials, genetic counseling, radiation oncology, and surgical oncology.

Connection with the Community

The cancer center serves an especially tight-knit community. "The small-town atmosphere makes it more personal. Everybody knows everybody, and I have not seen that anywhere else I have worked. There is something to be said about a community hospital where these nurses live and work in our community," said Erin Collins-Buchanan, MSW, CTR, oncology program director for Georgetown Cancer Center.

To help the cancer program better meet the needs of the patient population it serves, cancer registry staff leveraged results from the Georgetown Community Hospital Community Needs Assessment to plan screening and outreach priorities. One important finding from the report was the

prevalence of lung cancer in the community due to high smoking rates. In fact, lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer death for both men and women in the state of Kentucky.

To combat this finding, Georgetown Cancer Center offers smoking cessation classes year-round via the Freedom from Smoking program, an American Lung Association initiative. The cancer center also partners with the local health department to provide nicotine replacements for patients and community members who are trying to quit smoking.

Patients in the catchment area can be screened at Georgetown Community Hospital via its Low-Dose CT Lung Cancer Screening Clinic. Going forward, the program seeks to educate and promote these screenings to primary care providers and the public through its partnership with the Markey Cancer Center.

Cancer center staff and hospital staff also participate in a monthly general tumor board to discuss complex cases.

Outreach Efforts & Supportive Care

In 2016 the cancer center expanded its outreach efforts, participating in numerous activities to make the public aware of the services it offers, as well as to educate the community on cancer prevention and screening practices. In addition to events like Relay for Life and an annual Cancer Survivor Dinner, the cancer center continued to build meaningful relationships with its community with a "Dinner with a Doc" held during Colon Cancer

Select Support Services

- Financial counseling
- Support groups
- Look Good, Feel Better
- Cancer rehabilitation services

Number of new analytic cases seen in 2016: 125

Awareness Month. At this event, the public could attend and have a discussion with a gastroenterologist about colon cancer screening and early detection.

Over the past months, Georgetown Cancer Center has also worked to address the need for additional cancer support groups. The cancer center now partners

with Hospice of the Bluegrass for a Living with Loss support group, a grief-based group available to family members affected by cancer or patients grieving their own cancer diagnosis.

Responding to patients' need for reliable transportation to and from appointments, the cancer center partners with the American

Cancer Society Road to Recovery program to provide rides, and has two transit buses run by volunteers to help shuttle patients between counties. "Our hospital mission is to make communities healthier," said Kouns. "Our cancer center is contributing to that mission with our community outreach initiatives." 

