

spotlight

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance on South Lake Union Seattle, Washington



If one were to simply list the accolades and achievements of Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, the nationally ranked cancer treatment center founded in 1998 by Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle Children's, and UW Medicine, it would likely require a journal of its own. Anchored by its 210,000 square foot main clinic on South Lake Union in Seattle, the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance catchment area includes western Washington (80 percent, approximately 32,000 patients) and other parts of the state (10 percent); some patients travel in from out of state and even out of country (another 10 percent).

Through its network of affiliated centers across five states including the Pacific Northwest and Hawaii, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance works with community-based clinicians, providing access to the latest

treatment options and a robust portfolio of clinical trials. It is ranked in the top 10 in the nation for adult cancer care in the United States by *US News & World Report*, its 13th year in a row, and is accredited by the American College of Radiology, College of American Pathologists, Commission on Cancer, American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics, Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy, and The Joint Commission.

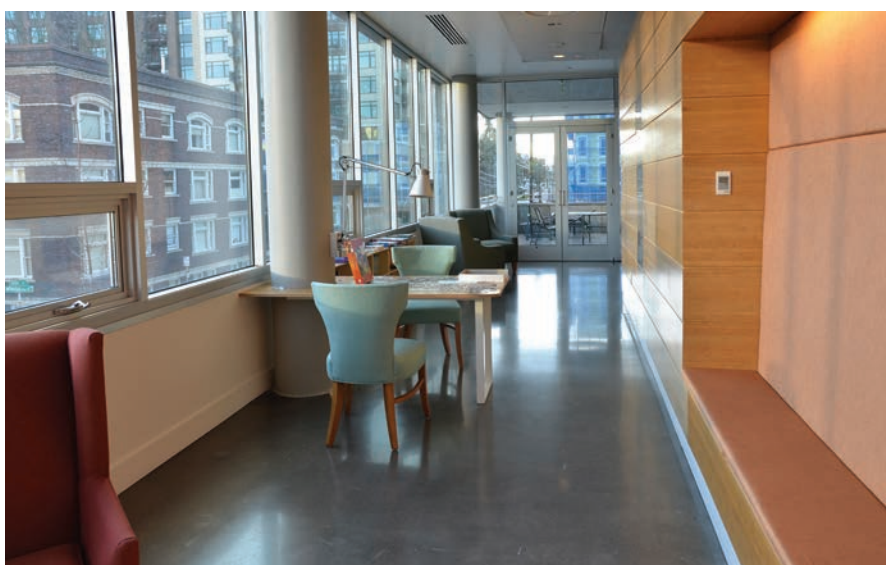
The clinic at South Lake Union provides comprehensive services, including procedures, radiation oncology, infusion therapy, and lab work. Inpatient care is provided by Seattle Cancer Care Alliance at its location at the nearby University of Washington Medical Center. Both hospitals use an inter-operable electronic health record, allowing for improved teamwork and communication among care providers for shared patients.

Within the outpatient clinic, a dedicated oncology pharmacy covers retail and mixing and distribution services. The clinic is staffed by more than 1,500 FTE employees, in addition to 300 physicians employed by Fred Hutch or UW Medicine.

Given Seattle Cancer Care Alliance's extensive patient population, even a building as large as South Lake Union has become cramped. As an interim step to create more space, personnel who do not need to interface with patients directly were moved to another building, but that was not a long-term solution. An expansion effort is now underway to add over 250,000 square feet to the building, more than doubling its size. The target date for completion is the year 2022.

Disease-Specific Care Teams

To provide patients with the best care possible, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance developed site-specific cancer care managed by a team of 60 patient coordinators. When patients first enter the network, they interact with a patient coordinator who matches patients with a care team based on their diagnosis. Care teams at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance are composed of physicians, nurses, and other providers across multiple disciplines (medical oncology, radiation oncology, surgery, pathology, etc.) who specialize in a specific cancer type. Every team has the equivalent of a multidisciplinary tumor board or conference; for high-volume cancer types, selected cases are discussed, but at rare cancer meetings every patient is usually discussed.



Each team follows extensive clinical pathways that represent the best available evidence and knowledge to guide care. This grouping into cancer types allows patients to develop a relationship with their providers. “Patients like a group process,” says F. Marc Stewart, MD, medical oncologist and medical director of Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. “They like meeting two or three different specialists, having their case discussed, and having the same specialists come back and give them a unified opinion about next steps.” This vertical approach to care rather than horizontal has resulted in higher risk-adjusted survival rates across every cancer type than the national average.

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance also places a great deal of emphasis on supportive care services, offering psychiatric care, nutrition, genetic counseling, physical therapy, pain management, social work, chaplaincy, fertility treatment, sexuality counseling, and more. The outpatient clinic on South Lake Union introduced a complementary and integrative medicine program in the summer of 2018, which includes an acupuncturist, a massage and yoga therapist, and a naturopathic physician.

On the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance campus, two patient houses exist to support cancer patients. The Pete Gross House contains 70 beds and primarily supports immune-compromised patients undergoing transplants or cellular immunotherapy. It also houses patients traveling long distances. The Seattle Cancer Care Alliance House is for the general oncology population and is more open to engagement and interaction between families and patients. With 80 beds, patients can stay for as little as one night if needed.

Cutting-Edge Cancer Research

With a focus on complex care and clinical research, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance is at the forefront of the latest in advanced cancer treatment. Leading cancer types treated are breast, lung, colorectal, and prostate, but as a tertiary care provider, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance sees a disproportionate number of complex or rare cancers, especially blood and bone cancers. In fact, E. Donnall Thomas, MD, former director of medical oncology at Fred Hutch, won the 1990 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for his work in




developing bone marrow transplantation to treat leukemia and other blood cancers. The Fred Hutch Bone Marrow Transplant Program at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance has established itself as a leader in the clinical use of bone marrow and stem cell transplantation, and has performed more than 14,000 bone marrow transplants over the past 40+ years—more than any other cancer treatment institute in the world.

In the vanguard of immunotherapy research, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance is an authorized treatment center for the two U.S. Food and Drug Administration–approved CAR T-cell therapies, tisagenlecleucel (Kymriah®) and axicabtagene ciloleucel (Yescarta®). More than 200 patients have participated in CAR T-cell clinical trials through Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. With the December 2016 opening of the Bezos Family Immunotherapy Clinic, which is dedicated to cellular immunotherapy, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance provides access to additional clinical trials and therapies. In addition to studies on cellular immunotherapy, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance network conducts cutting-edge research on immunotherapy checkpoint inhibitors for cancer.

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance boasts an extensive clinical trials program with between 400 and 500 open clinical trials at any given time—both therapeutic studies and research focused on improving quality of life.

Fifteen to twenty percent of all patients are given the opportunity to enroll in trials, more than double the national average.

Through its network of 11 affiliated centers in Alaska, Idaho, Washington, Montana, and Hawaii, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance supports coordinated, quality care for patients both at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance and closer to home. As an example, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance is working closely with Hawaii Pacific Health—their network center in Hawaii—on a number of quality improvement initiatives in oncology care, including screening processes and effective early detection. Working collaboratively “benefits everyone,” said Dr. Stewart. “We’re looking at things related to population management—how well we do screenings...how do we reach the population and offer services outside of the central Seattle area? Expanding network presence into the community is exciting; continuing to develop research approaches on the frontier of medicine is exciting.” 

Select Support Services

- Psychiatry
- Genetic counseling
- Nutrition services
- Fertility counseling

Number of new analytic cases seen in 2018: 7,700