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Integrating Research and Clinical Care

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## Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center University of Miami Hospital and Clinics

Integrating Research and Clinical Care

**T**he Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center/University of Miami Hospital and Clinics (UMHC) integrates cancer research, education, and clinical care programs to provide quality care to patients in a variety of treatment settings throughout the community. The center sits adjacent to the University's forty-bed hospital and serves as the point of service for patients entering the University of Miami health system. Patients requiring intensive or critical care facilities receive treatment at Jackson Memorial Hospital, the university's primary teaching facility, and one of several hospitals throughout the city with operating agreements with Sylvester/UMHC. Serving patients in multiple locations allows more convenient access for Miami's multilingual, multicultural community, said W. Jarrard Goodwin, M.D., F.A.C.S., director of the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Miami in Miami, Fla.

Reconfiguration of Sylvester/UMHC's clinical facility and rapid advances in technology have facilitated outpatient treatment. Sylvester/UMHC operates a day hospital where patients receiving outpatient treatment can be monitored for twelve to twenty-three hours if necessary without being officially admitted. The center is planning a forty-eight hour observation unit to bridge inpatient and outpatient care. Treating patients at appropriate levels of care allows Sylvester/UMHC to provide care that is higher quality and more cost-efficient, Goodwin noted.

Sylvester/UMHC is also planning an outpatient bone marrow transplant program. A night-time urgent care center as well as a full-time nurse practitioner to coordinate the program may be added. Without a supportive hospital administration,

such an undertaking would be difficult, Goodwin stated. "The clinical research involved in the bone marrow transplant program is facilitated by our hospital administration's support of staffing and facility changes."

### FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

Construction of the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center facility has enabled the University of Miami's clinical and research components to be brought together in one setting under Goodwin's leadership. Uniting these components facilitates the application of new scientific findings to patient care.

Translational research makes the most significant impact on clinical care when information is clearly communicated from the laboratory to the clinic. The center, which houses the offices for Sylvester/UMHC scientists, clinical researchers, and clinical physicians, has established formal structures, such as committees, conferences and symposia, and newsletters, to promote interaction among research and clinical staff. However, less structured, personal interactions have helped forge effective working relationships among colleagues. Improved coordination of research and resource sharing have resulted in more cost-efficient administration of programs.

The mobile mammography screening is an example of how Sylvester/UMHC translates scientific data into clinical practice. Researchers conduct surveys in Sylvester/UMHC's service area to identify those target populations at increased risk for breast cancer or populations that tend to present with later-stage disease due to lack of access to screening and treatment. The two Sylvester/UMHC mobile mammography vans then visit

women in those targeted areas, where clinical staff provide education and screening. Women who require follow-up treatment are scheduled for an appointment at the center. Women diagnosed with cancer are treated in the most appropriate setting across the medical campus.

Data collected from treatment sites across the University of Miami's medical campus are entered into Sylvester/UMHC's database, explained Edward J. Trapido, Sc.D., associate director of cancer control. Multidisciplinary specialists use that database to conduct epidemiologic studies of the causes of breast cancer, evaluation of breast cancer screening techniques, and linkage of laboratory studies to clinical outcomes data.

Trapido described translational research as a cyclical process that helps Sylvester/UMHC staff constantly improve the way they screen and treat patients. Studying familial risk factors and the reasons for declining mammography rescreening rates provides insight into how the mobile mammography project can be enhanced to reach more women at earlier stage of disease. "Our goal is to show that our programs are making a difference in providing better quality care to patients," Trapido said.

Sylvester/UMHC is a member of the major national cooperative groups and participates in pharmaceutical industry-sponsored clinical trials. In addition, scientists and clinicians are organized by site-specific groups to design in-house protocols. Marian Edelstein, assistant manager of clinical research, assesses newly conceived protocols and reviews them on the basis of scientific merit, estimated accrual, and resources required. To ensure that in-house clinical trials are cost effective, Sylvester/UMHC applies

*The University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center is the largest outpatient cancer facility in the southeastern United States and serves as the gateway for the University of Miami School of Medicine's cancer-related activities. In 1992 the center relocated to its new headquarters, a 117,500 square-foot building adjacent to the forty-bed University of Miami Hospital and Clinics. A large portion of Sylvester's inpatient clinical*

*work, including the inpatient unit of the Deed Club Bone Marrow Transplant Program, is conducted at Jackson Memorial Hospital, a Dade County-owned facility, which treats more cancer patients than any other hospital in Florida.*

#### **VITAL STATISTICS**

- Total system-wide bed size: 40
- Dedicated cancer unit beds: 35
- New analytic cancer patients seen each year: 2,000

- Managed care penetration in the state: 18 percent

#### **PATIENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

■ The Courtelis Center for Research and Treatment in Psychosocial Oncology provides individual and group counseling, stress management strategies, acupuncture, massage and physical therapy, nutrition counseling, and educational classes.

- The Cancer Information Service of Florida and Puerto Rico, part of Sylvester/UMHC's Division of Cancer Control, provides up-to-date information on every aspect of cancer, including symptoms, prevention, early detection and screening, treatment options, and local resources.
- Sylvester scientists participate in the National Network for Hispanic Cancer Prevention, a nationwide campaign to educate Hispanics about cancer prevention and encourage cancer screening.



the same approach used in treating patients on clinical pathways. "Our pathways help us streamline the process without sacrificing quality," Edelstein said.

As the only university hospital in Southeast Florida, and one of only three university hospitals in the entire state of Florida, Sylvester/UMHC maintains a competitive advantage within its service area.

Even so, Sylvester/UMHC is developing a regional network with the University of South Florida/Moffitt Cancer Center and the University of Florida/Shands in Gainesville for collaboration in the areas of teaching, research, and clinical care patient networks. University faculty representatives meet three times a year to discuss common issues and opportunities

for joint development. The universities plan to develop a joint melanoma research project.

Goodwin expects that Sylvester/UMHC's integration of research and clinical programs will continue to strengthen the university's commitment to its community. "We have so much more to gain by exploring what's beyond our own walls," Goodwin said. ■