



A MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONSORTIUM TO ADVANCE GENETIC COUNSELING IN ONCOLOGY, PHASE 2 PRACTICE PROFILES

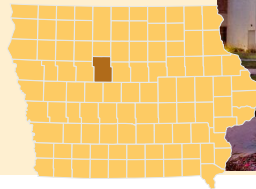
Norma Schmoker Cancer Center at UnityPoint Health and St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center

As cancer providers develop increasingly complex treatment plans, the results from somatic and/or germline tests are guiding personalized treatment decisions. To ensure that cancer providers are following the latest clinical recommendations around genetic counseling/testing, the Iowa Oncology Society (IOS) launched an initiative in 2021 to identify opportunities to improve cancer genetic counseling/testing in Iowa. Through this initiative, IOS recognized the need to highlight effective practices around cancer genetic counseling/testing in rural Iowa. The following practice profiles highlight how the **Norma Schmoker Cancer Center at UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center**, and **St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center** are ensuring that patients with cancer are appropriately being referred for genetic counseling/testing.

Norma Schmoker Cancer Center at UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center

Location: Fort Dodge, Iowa

Center Type: Community Cancer Program



Providing Cancer Care for the Region

The Norma Schmoker Cancer Center (formerly Trinity Cancer Center) at UnityPoint Health Trinity Regional Medical Center is a Commission on Cancer-approved cancer program located in Fort Dodge, Iowa. The city of Fort Dodge has a population of 24,871 and is in Webster County (population of 36,626). The comprehensive cancer program originally opened in 2003 as Trinity Cancer Center and, in 2022, provided more than 12,000 visits and 2,500 radiation treatments. The cancer program provides surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and supportive care to patients living in a region that includes 9 counties in North Central

Iowa. Trinity Regional Medical Center has achieved Pathway to Excellence designation by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Genetic Counseling and Testing

At the Norma Schmoker Cancer Center, roughly 150 to 200 patients are referred for cancer genetic counseling and testing each year. When patients are referred, the coordinator for genetic counseling enters information into an online portal and schedules a telehealth appointment through a genomics company. The company provides pre-test and post-test counseling and coordinates cascade

testing for family members when necessary. The Cancer Center chose to use a telehealth genomics company because they found that their patients did not wish to travel long distances to see a genetic counselor. Since many patients living in rural areas do not use video-based communication, they often meet with genetic counselors over the phone.

Prior authorization for genetic testing is coordinated through a third party. If patients face any financial difficulty covering out-of-pocket costs for genetic testing, the Hospital has a Foundation (Trinity Foundation) that covers the cost to ensure every patient may receive testing. The Trinity Foundation was established in 1983 and accepts charitable contributions to advance the quality and availability of health care services in the region.

UnityPoint Health provides a network of care to communities throughout Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin through 17 regional hospitals, 19 community network hospitals, and over 370 clinics.

High-Risk Breast Cancer Clinic

The Cancer Center runs a high-risk breast cancer clinic where they evaluate patients at increased risk, perform an individualized assessment, and make recommendations for prevention and screening. The clinic is led by a leading breast surgeon and medical oncologist, and often refers high-risk individuals for genetic counseling and testing.

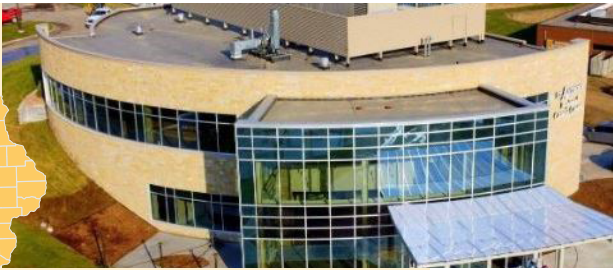
Tracking Referrals and Testing Rates

While most patients who are referred for genetic counseling choose to receive testing, there are a few who may refuse to undergo testing because they have concerns about how the results may impact their ability to obtain health or life insurance. The cancer program also has a breast cancer navigator and nurse navigator who track patients referred for testing and follow up to remind patients about the importance of testing.

St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center

Location: Carroll, Iowa

Center Type: Community Cancer Program



Providing Cancer Care for the Region

St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center is a full-service cancer program in Carroll, Iowa. The city of Carroll is in Carroll County which has a population of 20,567 and is located centrally in the western part of the state. Ninety percent (90%) of patients seen at the Cancer Center are referred from six healthcare facilities in a 30-mile radius. In 2022, the Cancer Center saw 432 new cancer diagnoses and had over 14,000 patient visits. Approximately 70% of patients travel between 10 to 70 miles to receive cancer care at St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center. This represents an area that covers 17 counties. St. Anthony Regional Hospital is a 99-bed facility and is designated as one of sixteen regional hospitals in Iowa by the Iowa State Department of Health.

Recognizing a need to expand services to meet the needs of the growing population of aging adults in rural Iowa, the cancer program opened a new cancer center in 2020. The new facility allows medical oncology, radiation oncology, and infusion services to be under one roof. The cancer program also expanded its support services to include a nurse navigator, social worker, more nutrition programs, and clinical trials to patients.

Genetic Counseling and Testing

Medical oncology services are provided through a partnership with contracted medical oncology physicians. Patients can also be referred to meet with a genetic counselor and receive genetic testing. Surgeons are proactive about discussing genetic test-

ing with appropriate patients and referring them to genetic counselors. Tumor board meetings are held every month to discuss multimodal treatment planning and the importance of genetic testing in appropriate patients. While St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center treats many cancer types, their providers know when to refer patients who require complex surgery or treatment. For example, patients who require pancreatic surgery or head/neck surgery are referred to the University of Iowa (approximately 3 hours by car) or the University of Nebraska (approximately 2 hours by car).

Iowa has 118 hospitals in the state. Only 10 hospitals hold Commission on Cancer (CoC) accreditation.

Future Direction

St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center is currently involved in a 5-year National Cancer Information grant led by the University of Iowa that is studying how rural hospitals may pursue CoC accreditation. For the past 2 years, they have been on a journey to collect the data needed to track progress towards fulfilling CoC standards. The Cancer Center has performed a full-scale review of how it delivers services such as psychosocial, transportation, mental health, nutrition, genetic counseling, navigation, and palliative care. By being a part of the Iowa Cancer Affiliate Network (ICAN), St. Anthony Regional Cancer Center is implementing new processes while evaluating the utility of CoC accreditation standards as it delivers care to its community.



A publication from the Iowa Oncology Society (IOS) education project, "A Multidisciplinary Consortium to Advance Genetic Counseling in Oncology, Phase 2." Learn more at acc-cancer.org/iowa-genetic-counseling.

Founded in 1992, the **Iowa Oncology Society** is the largest oncology professional organization in the state. IOS comprises a powerful community of oncologists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pharmacists, and other multidisciplinary care providers involved in the treatment of patients with cancer.

IOS is one of 23 State Chapter Members that is managed by—and collaborates with—the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) and is a State Affiliate of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. IOS members receive valuable educational content and innovative resources designed to keep them ahead of the local and national challenges and trends directly impacting the high-quality care their patients deserve. For more information, visit ios-iowa.com or call 301.984.9496. Follow us on LinkedIn @Oncology State Societies at ACCC and Twitter @OSSatACCC.

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